

2023-25 Biennial Budget Request



This document is not the official budget submittal for the Department.

It is a reference document for business purposes. Being such, it excludes some components common to a standard submittal, the most pronounced being the reference documents for decision packages.

Please refer to the system of record, the Agency Budget Requests (ABR) system, for all details and documents related to the 2023-25 Biennial Budget Request.

Agency Budget Requests (ABR) system: <https://abr.ofm.wa.gov/>

1. Select budget session 2023-25 Regular
2. Select agency: Department of Fish and Wildlife (477).
3. Click the "Search" button.



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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Main Office Location: Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington Street SE, Olympia, WA

September 14, 2022

Mr. David Schumacher
Director, Office of Financial Management
P.O. Box 43113
Olympia, Washington 98504-3113

Dear Mr. Schumacher:

Enclosed you will find the 2023-25 operating budget request for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), as approved by the Fish and Wildlife Commission. Our request seeks funding to maintain current service levels from increases in the last two legislative sessions and includes new high priority policy investments. Our goals are to continue to succeed in recent new work and make new strides preserving and perpetuating Washington's species. We have limited our requests to activities central to protection and preservation of the state's fish and wildlife resources and providing sustainable opportunities.

The state's fish and wildlife resources are central to the economy of the state. Fishing, hunting, and wildlife watching activities contribute over \$4.5 billion each year in economic activity, and nearly \$350 million per biennium directly to the state general fund. Commercial fishing supports thousands of jobs and many millions in personal income. The packages included in this request will reap economic benefits for local communities as well as enhance citizens' quality of life.

We continue to lack the resources necessary to track the status of fish and wildlife species of greatest conservation need and implement protection and recovery actions for these species. Meanwhile, human stressors and climate change are accelerating losses of biodiversity, the foundation of state's natural resources-based economy. We are proud to advance a request for much-needed funding to protect and restore habitat, recover populations of species of greater conservation need, and to educate the public about fish and wildlife conservation.

In addition to the operating expenditure authority requests included in the enclosed submittal, we have two other asks. The first concerns the Duckabush Estuary Restoration project. This project received partial funding for the state match portion in the operating budget of the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). RCO and WDFW's request is to make this funding available in the capital budget in the new biennium. The second involves seeding the funding for a future program, Shoreline Loans. Our goal is to transfer \$4.5 million in revenue to the Special Wildlife Account to capitalize a revolving loan program to be established later. WDFW doesn't currently

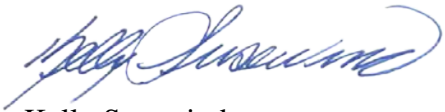
David Schumacher
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have the authority to issue loans to private individuals, but we are looking to set aside the principal in our Special Wildlife Account as we work with non-profits, the Department of Ecology, the Puget Sound Partnership, the Office of Financial Management, and the legislature on a plan for implementation.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these requests. We look forward to supporting your efforts in developing the Governor's budget proposal. We welcome new ideas and further refinement of these proposals.

WDFW staff members are available to assist you with evaluating this request and will be happy to answer any questions as they arise. If you have any questions, please contact Morgan Stinson, Chief Financial Officer, at (206) 949-7542.

Sincerely,



Kelly Susewind
Director

Enclosure

cc: Jim Cahill, Senior Budget Assistant
Matthew Hunter, Budget Assistant
Ruth Musgrave, Senior Policy Advisor for Natural Resources
Tom McBride, Legislative Director
Morgan Stinson, Chief Financial Officer

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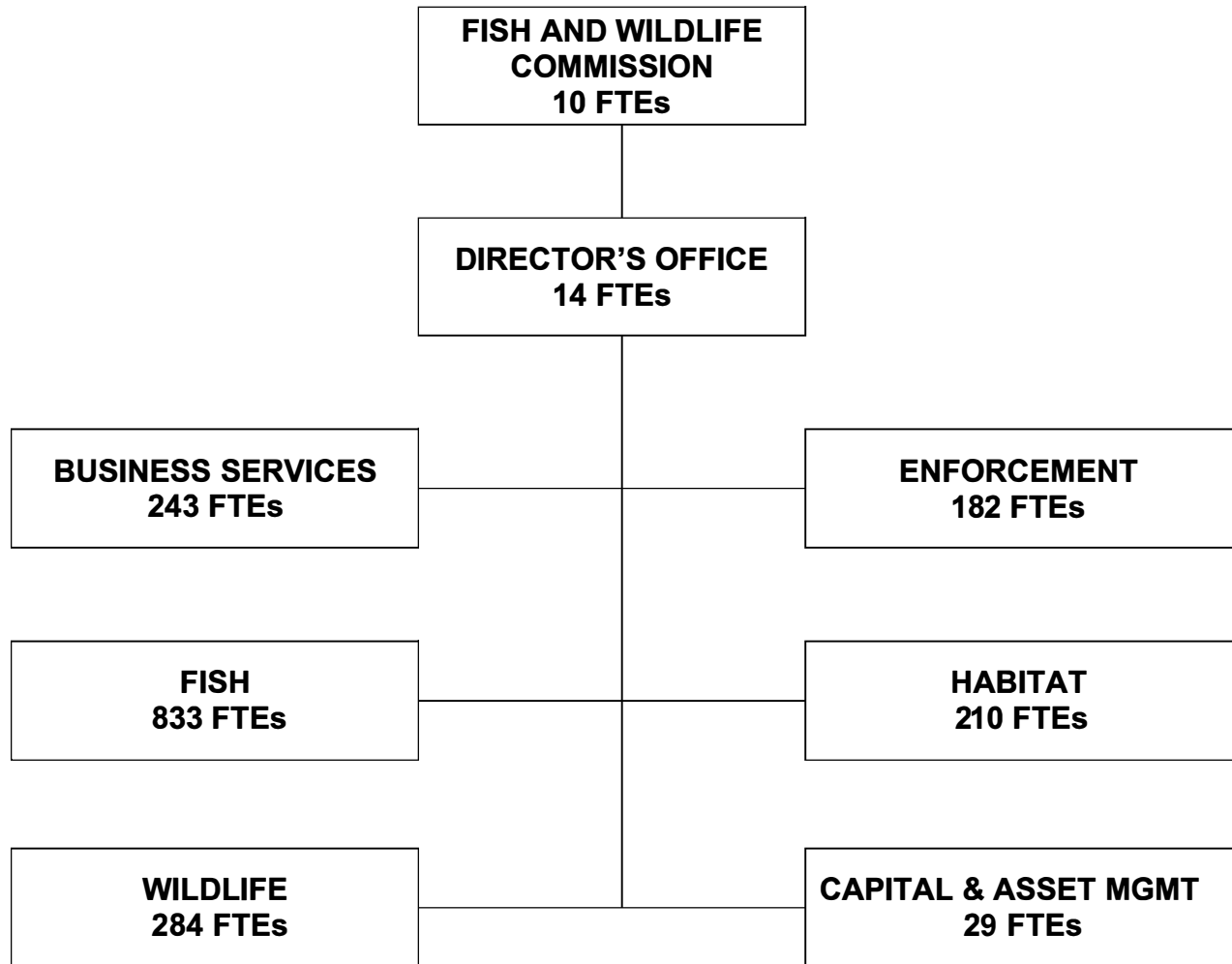
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Agency Information



Clamming at sunset on Moclips Beach, Ocean Shores. Photo credit: Heather Angelbeck

WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART BY FTE ACTUALS





Dollars in Thousands

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife
2023-25 Regular Budget Session
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal**

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

A046 Preserve and Restore Aquatic Habitats and Species

Perpetuating and managing wildlife, fish and shellfish into the future requires healthy aquatic habitat. Washington's imperiled salmon and orca populations need healthy habitat to ensure ecosystem support throughout their life. The key reasons the state has seen a decline in wild salmon populations and subsequent orca health is due to habitat quality that has degraded over time.

The department strives to preserve aquatic habitat health by protecting habitat from the effects of construction projects through the Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) work, consulting with businesses, landowners and governments regarding aquatic species impacts, reducing the risk and devastation of oil spills, ensuring enough water remains in waterways to support healthy fish lifecycles, and monitoring and controlling invasive species. The department seeks to restore degraded habitat by improving fish passage through removal of stream barriers and screening of water diversions, developing and implementing plans to recover imperiled species and seeking out grant funding to use towards completing various restoration projects. Furthermore, effectively addressing the dual challenge posed by the changing climate and a rapidly growing human population is fundamental to WDFW's success in the 21st century in all of these areas. To ensure this success, the department studies and plans for climate impacts on aquatic lands and resulting effects on species.

In order to successfully preserve and restore aquatic habitats, the department maintains enforcement presence throughout the state to ensure construction projects near waterways are compliant with HPA permits, inspect vessels for invasive species, perform orca patrols and enforce all statewide rules and regulations that protect aquatic habitats and species.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal**

Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Account	FY 2024	FY 2025	Biennial Total
FTE	381.4	384.9	383.2
21S Aquatic Invasive Species Mngmt Acct			
21S-1 State	\$21	\$26	\$47
02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account			
02R-1 State	\$481	\$504	\$985
14G Ballast Water & Biofouling Mgt Acct			
14G-1 State	\$5	\$5	\$10
07V Fish & Wildlife Enforcement Reward			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$4	\$4	\$8
444 Fish & Wildlife Equipment Revolving			
444-6 Non-Appropriated	\$118	\$118	\$236
24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc			
24N-1 State	\$2,291	\$2,287	\$4,578
001 General Fund			
001-1 State	\$48,743	\$51,701	\$100,444
001-2 Federal	\$5,783	\$6,246	\$12,029
001-7 Local	\$1,552	\$1,525	\$3,077
001 Account Total	\$56,078	\$59,472	\$115,550
104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account			
104-1 State	\$604	\$823	\$1,427
23P Model Toxics Control Operating Acct			
23P-1 State	\$2,583	\$2,542	\$5,125
217 Oil Spill Prevention Account			
217-1 State	\$504	\$612	\$1,116
200 Reg Fish Enhance Salmonid Recovery			
200-2 Federal	\$2,377	\$2,624	\$5,001
209 Regional Fisheries Enhance Group			
209-6 Non-Appropriated	\$1,230	\$1,042	\$2,272
110 Special Wildlife Account			
110-7 Local	\$6	\$7	\$13

Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment

ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife
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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Statewide Strategy: Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes

Expected Results

Aquatic habitats will contribute to a robust ecosystem that supports fish and wildlife in Washington. These healthy habitats will contribute to strong species diversity and abundant opportunities for hunting, fishing and non-consumptive outdoor recreation. Those hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities will contribute to economic health in rural communities reliant on outdoor recreation. Local and state governments will use the agency's scientific knowledge in their land use and permitting decisions leading to sustained critical habitats.

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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

A047 Preserve and Restore Terrestrial Habitats and Species

Perpetuating and managing wildlife, fish and shellfish into the future requires healthy terrestrial habitat. The department strives to preserve terrestrial habitat health by consulting with businesses, landowners and governments regarding terrestrial species and habitat impacts and legalities, partnering with private landowners to implement conservation strategies, permitting and regulating wildlife-related businesses such as taxidermy and rehabilitation centers, and responding to and mitigating wolf conflicts. The department seeks to restore degraded terrestrial habitat and imperiled species by developing and implementing plans to recover and sustain diverse wildlife and seeking out grant funding to use towards completing various habitat restoration projects. Furthermore, effectively addressing the dual challenge posed by the changing climate and a rapidly growing human population is fundamental to WDFW's success in the 21st century in all of these areas. To ensure this success, the department studies and plans for climate impacts on lands and resulting effects on species.

In order to successfully preserve and restore terrestrial habitats, the department maintains enforcement presence throughout the state to respond to incidents such as wolf depredations, ensure compliance of wildlife related businesses such as taxidermists and rehabilitation centers and enforce all statewide rules and regulations that protect terrestrial habitats and species.

ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Account	FY 2024	FY 2025	Biennial Total
FTE	150.9	166.6	158.8
02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account			
02R-1 State	\$21	\$22	\$43
098 East Wash Pheasant Enhancement Acct			
098-1 State	\$2	\$3	\$5
07V Fish & Wildlife Enforcement Reward			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$9	\$9	\$18
24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc			
24N-1 State	\$1,638	\$1,636	\$3,274
001 General Fund			
001-1 State	\$26,861	\$28,812	\$55,673
001-2 Federal	\$4,026	\$4,348	\$8,374
001-7 Local	\$316	\$310	\$626
001 Account Total	\$31,203	\$33,470	\$64,673
104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account			
104-1 State	\$2,094	\$2,838	\$4,932
217 Oil Spill Prevention Account			
217-1 State	\$1	\$1	\$2
01B ORV & Nonhighway Account			
01B-1 State	\$1	\$1	\$2
110 Special Wildlife Account			
110-7 Local	\$62	\$75	\$137
14A Wildlife Rehabilitation Account			
14A-1 State	\$320	\$319	\$639
19W Wolf-Livestock Conflict Account			
19W-6 Non-Appropriated	\$2	\$2	\$4

Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment

Statewide Strategy: Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes

Expected Results

ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Terrestrial habitats will contribute to a robust ecosystem that supports healthy wildlife in Washington. These healthy habitats will contribute to strong species diversity and abundant opportunities for hunting, fishing and non-consumptive outdoor recreation. Those hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities will contribute to economic health in rural communities reliant on outdoor recreation. With their benefit in mind, local and state governments will use the agency's scientific knowledge in their land use and permitting decisions leading to sustained critical habitats.

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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

A048 Acquire and Manage Lands

WDFW owns and manages over one million acres of land throughout Washington. These lands provide habitat for fish and wildlife, as well as recreational opportunities for the public, such as hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing. WDFW's land base is strategically developed based on the conservation needs of fish and wildlife, and provides sustainable fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing and other recreational opportunities when compatible with healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations and their habitats. To effectively and responsibly own and manage public lands, the department maintains and improves the ecological health of its lands, strategically acquires new lands or sells lands that no longer serve the mission, builds and maintains safe, sanitary and ecologically friendly water access sites and ensures public safety through enforcement presence.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal**

Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Account	FY 2024	FY 2025	Biennial Total
FTE	141.1	142.5	141.8
02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account			
02R-1 State	\$316	\$332	\$648
098 East Wash Pheasant Enhancement Acct			
098-1 State	\$4	\$7	\$11
22N Fish and Wildlife Fed Lnds Rev Acct			
22N-6 Non-Appropriated	\$50	\$50	\$100
07V Fish & Wildlife Enforcement Reward			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$16	\$16	\$32
444 Fish & Wildlife Equipment Revolving			
444-6 Non-Appropriated	\$117	\$117	\$234
24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc			
24N-1 State	\$5,094	\$5,087	\$10,181
001 General Fund			
001-1 State	\$5,172	\$5,164	\$10,336
001-2 Federal	\$8,602	\$9,289	\$17,891
001-7 Local	\$775	\$762	\$1,537
001 Account Total	\$14,549	\$15,215	\$29,764
104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account			
104-1 State	\$312	\$462	\$774
01B ORV & Nonhighway Account			
01B-1 State	\$321	\$309	\$630
110 Special Wildlife Account			
110-1 State	\$1,472	\$1,438	\$2,910
110-2 Federal	\$263	\$261	\$524
110-7 Local	\$1,465	\$1,774	\$3,239
110 Account Total	\$3,200	\$3,473	\$6,673
14A Wildlife Rehabilitation Account			
14A-1 State	\$1	\$1	\$2
19W Wolf-Livestock Conflict Account			
19W-6 Non-Appropriated	\$7	\$7	\$14

Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment

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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Statewide Strategy: Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes

Expected Results

Land management will result in the conservation and restoration of diversity of Washington's fish and wildlife species and their habitats, while providing affordable access to hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching opportunities. Department land and sites will be managed appropriately to balance hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing with ecosystem preservation. Land management will successfully preserve or enhance its habitat value, minimize the spread of invasive species, and support the conservation of biodiversity and the recovery of threatened and endangered species.

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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

A049 Manage Fishing Opportunities

WDFW is responsible for the management of Washington commercial and recreational fisheries. Management of these fisheries includes maintaining compliance with complex intersections of tribal treaties, international agreements, case law, federal Endangered Species Act restrictions and monitoring of species health and populations. To manage fisheries, the department monitors and manages populations of both shellfish and fin fish; develops, negotiates and implements fisheries co-management plans; markets and sells fishing licenses; and manages licenses for commercial fishing groups. In order to effectively manage fisheries, the department maintains enforcement presence in commercial marine areas as well as recreational fishing locations for trout and anadromous fish, such as salmon.

ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Account	FY 2024	FY 2025	Biennial Total
FTE	393.3	389.5	391.4
21S Aquatic Invasive Species Mngmt Acct			
21S-1 State	\$57	\$71	\$128
02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account			
02R-1 State	\$2,717	\$2,850	\$5,567
259 Coastal Crab Account			
259-6 Non-Appropriated	\$39	\$38	\$77
320 Puget Sound Crab Pot Buoy Tag Acct			
320-6 Non-Appropriated	\$20	\$15	\$35
098 East Wash Pheasant Enhancement Acct			
098-1 State	\$8	\$14	\$22
07V Fish & Wildlife Enforcement Reward			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$103	\$103	\$206
24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc			
24N-1 State	\$9,145	\$9,132	\$18,277
001 General Fund			
001-1 State	\$39,116	\$37,801	\$76,917
001-2 Federal	\$11,345	\$12,251	\$23,596
001-7 Local	\$8,508	\$8,364	\$16,872
001 Account Total	\$58,969	\$58,416	\$117,385
104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account			
104-1 State	\$4,096	\$5,551	\$9,647
217 Oil Spill Prevention Account			
217-1 State	\$10	\$12	\$22
01B ORV & Nonhighway Account			
01B-1 State	\$5	\$5	\$10
507 Oyster Reserve Land Account			
507-1 State	\$314	\$75	\$389
04M Recreational Fisheries Enhancement			
04M-1 State	\$259	\$220	\$479
12G Rockfish Research Account			
12G-6 Non-Appropriated	\$232	\$222	\$454

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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Account	FY 2024	FY 2025	Biennial Total
110 Special Wildlife Account			
110-7 Local	\$49	\$59	\$108
09J WA Coast Crab Pot Buoy Tag Account			
09J-6 Non-Appropriated	\$60	\$62	\$122
071 Warm Water Game Fish Account			
071-1 State	\$18	\$18	\$36
14A Wildlife Rehabilitation Account			
14A-1 State	\$1	\$1	\$2
19W Wolf-Livestock Conflict Account			
19W-6 Non-Appropriated	\$5	\$5	\$10

Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment

Statewide Strategy: Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes

Expected Results

Fishing season decisions support healthy fish populations and ensure that commercial and recreational fishing harvest levels are sustainable. Fishing opportunities contribute towards economic activity, while complying with federal endangered species and other environmental requirements. WDFW and tribes work cooperatively to effectively manage fish populations. WDFW honors tribal treaty rights that were signed by the federal government in 1854-55 and upheld by *United States v. Washington*, 384 F. Supp. 312 (W.D. Wash. 1974).

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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

A050 Produce Hatchery Fish

WDFW maintains 81 hatcheries, either through direct ownership or management contracted with cities or counties in order to meet their mitigation requirements. These hatcheries produce healthy fish to benefit the citizens of Washington while providing conservation to natural origin salmonids. Production of hatchery fish is critical for the majority of fishing opportunities throughout Washington – trout and anadromous salmon and steelhead fisheries rely on the presence of hatchery fish in our waterways. Additionally, production of salmon, specifically Chinook, is critical to the recovery of southern resident killer whales. Hatchery conservation programs contribute to protecting and preserving natural runs of salmon and steelhead. Hatchery programs also help us meet co-management plans and court ordered directives.

The production of hatchery fish also requires facility maintenance of the system of 81 hatcheries owned or managed by the department.

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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Account	FY 2024	FY 2025	Biennial Total
FTE	399.8	396.9	398.4
21S Aquatic Invasive Species Mngmt Acct			
21S-1 State	\$1	\$1	\$2
02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account			
02R-1 State	\$1,683	\$1,757	\$3,440
259 Coastal Crab Account			
259-6 Non-Appropriated	\$2	\$2	\$4
07V Fish & Wildlife Enforcement Reward			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$48	\$48	\$96
444 Fish & Wildlife Equipment Revolving			
444-6 Non-Appropriated	\$549	\$549	\$1,098
24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc			
24N-1 State	\$6,695	\$6,686	\$13,381
001 General Fund			
001-1 State	\$31,780	\$29,763	\$61,543
001-2 Federal	\$17,100	\$18,464	\$35,564
001-7 Local	\$15,625	\$15,359	\$30,984
001 Account Total	\$64,505	\$63,586	\$128,091
104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account			
104-1 State	\$999	\$1,409	\$2,408
507 Oyster Reserve Land Account			
507-1 State	\$25	\$6	\$31
04M Recreational Fisheries Enhancement			
04M-1 State	\$1,521	\$1,304	\$2,825
12G Rockfish Research Account			
12G-6 Non-Appropriated	\$10	\$10	\$20
071 Warm Water Game Fish Account			
071-1 State	\$971	\$971	\$1,942

Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment

Statewide Strategy: Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes

Expected Results

ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Fishing opportunities are maintained or increased, without adversely affecting wild salmon and steelhead. Fish production supports Washington's sport and commercial fishing industry, creating economic activity and recreational opportunities throughout the state. Wild salmon and steelhead populations are stable or recovering. Native fish populations are recovering and hatchery operations do not adversely affect wild fish.

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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

A051 Manage Hunting Opportunities

WDFW's wildlife population monitoring, protection and research help us ensure that wildlife populations will endure and provide future generations the opportunities to enjoy an abundant resource. These hunting opportunities, if protected in perpetuity, will promote a healthy economy; protect community character; maintain an overall high quality of life while delivering high-quality hunting experiences for the human populations we serve. In order to effectively manage hunting opportunities, the department surveys game populations and population trends, as well as health of the populations, sets sustainable hunting seasons, secures hunting access on private lands, provides opportunities for hunter education, responds to game wildlife conflicts and markets and sells hunting licenses.

In order to sustainably manage hunting, the department maintains enforcement presence throughout the state to deter and address instances of poaching, ensure hunting safety and make sure that regulations, such as time, place and method of hunts, are upheld and statewide natural resources are protected.

ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Account	FY 2024	FY 2025	Biennial Total
FTE	136.7	146.7	141.7
21S Aquatic Invasive Species Mngmt Acct			
21S-1 State	\$19	\$24	\$43
02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account			
02R-1 State	\$339	\$356	\$695
098 East Wash Pheasant Enhancement Acct			
098-1 State	\$215	\$363	\$578
24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc			
24N-1 State	\$5,950	\$5,942	\$11,892
001 General Fund			
001-1 State	\$9,725	\$11,130	\$20,855
001-2 Federal	\$8,269	\$8,928	\$17,197
001-7 Local	\$364	\$358	\$722
001 Account Total	\$18,358	\$20,416	\$38,774
104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account			
104-1 State	\$892	\$1,207	\$2,099
217 Oil Spill Prevention Account			
217-1 State	\$1	\$1	\$2
01B ORV & Nonhighway Account			
01B-1 State	\$2	\$2	\$4
507 Oyster Reserve Land Account			
507-1 State	\$4	\$1	\$5
04M Recreational Fisheries Enhancement			
04M-1 State	\$7	\$6	\$13
110 Special Wildlife Account			
110-7 Local	\$11	\$12	\$23
071 Warm Water Game Fish Account			
071-1 State	\$51	\$51	\$102
14A Wildlife Rehabilitation Account			
14A-1 State	\$2	\$2	\$4
19W Wolf-Livestock Conflict Account			
19W-6 Non-Appropriated	\$6	\$6	\$12

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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment

Statewide Strategy: Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes

Expected Results

Successful management of hunting opportunities will result in sustained healthy and abundant game species populations. Those populations will maintain hunting opportunities and outdoor quality of life, opportunities to harvest quality protein, boosts to local economies reliant on outdoor recreation and private lands access for hunting opportunities. Additionally, educational programs and enforcement of state regulations will promote public safety. Careful management will continue to allow Washington hunters the opportunity to hunt 10 big game species, 19 small game species and 42 migratory bird species. Hunters will have a convenient and simple way to understand and purchase their license options.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
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Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

A052 Provide Non-Consumptive Recreational Opportunities

Non-consumptive recreation passively benefits from all work of the department. WDFW promotes the opportunity to actively enjoy those passive benefits by working with local communities to develop and promote wildlife-viewing activities and festivals, providing wildlife web cameras featuring bald eagles, salmon, owls and more on its website, maintaining interpretive signs at select wildlife areas, and producing self-guiding pamphlets and birding trail maps. Additionally, WDFW promotes wildlife festivals, citizen science, bird watching, land-based whale watching, fish-migrator viewing, beach combing, target shooting, outdoor learning, outdoor skill building, self-guided outdoor experiences, community-centric resources to interpret local wildlife and fish resources and active lifestyle opportunities that allow the public direct contact with wilderness and wild native places.

Account	FY 2024	FY 2025	Biennial Total
FTE	4.9	4.8	4.9
02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account			
02R-1 State	\$26	\$27	\$53
07V Fish & Wildlife Enforcement Reward			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$5	\$5	\$10
24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc			
24N-1 State	\$62	\$62	\$124
001 General Fund			
001-1 State	\$318	\$308	\$626
001-2 Federal	\$36	\$38	\$74
001-7 Local	\$94	\$93	\$187
001 Account Total	\$448	\$439	\$887
104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account			
104-1 State	\$456	\$618	\$1,074
04M Recreational Fisheries Enhancement			
04M-1 State	\$152	\$128	\$280

Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment

Statewide Strategy: Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes

Expected Results

ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

*

Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Through promotion of outdoor recreation, WDFW fosters a network of conservation partners, engaged communities, communications specialists and the public both in person and online. This network collaboratively supports wildlife viewing and wildlife-based outdoor recreation, fostering durable community-supported conservation solutions. These conservation solutions maintain and improve opportunities for future generations to experience Washington's wildlife and fish resources firsthand, and contribute to a wildlife-based outdoor economy.

ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
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Dollars in Thousands

*

Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

A053 Business Management and Obligations

An effective agency requires administrative infrastructure that successfully supports the needs of staff who perform work directly in service to the mission. The department's business management work comprehensively supports the entire agency and meets obligations by providing agency leadership and strategy, communicating with the public and legislature, managing finance and contracts, managing human resources, managing information technology infrastructure, building and maintaining office facilities, maintaining agency records, responding to public safety incidents (obligation to general policing by fully commissioned WDFW officers) and accessing legal counsel from the Office of the Attorney General.

ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Account	FY 2024	FY 2025	Biennial Total
FTE	422.4	418.4	420.4
21S Aquatic Invasive Species Mngmt Acct			
21S-1 State	\$365	\$449	\$814
02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account			
02R-1 State	\$1,086	\$1,138	\$2,224
259 Coastal Crab Account			
259-6 Non-Appropriated	\$7	\$7	\$14
320 Puget Sound Crab Pot Buoy Tag Acct			
320-6 Non-Appropriated	\$4	\$3	\$7
098 East Wash Pheasant Enhancement Acct			
098-1 State	\$21	\$36	\$57
07V Fish & Wildlife Enforcement Reward			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$102	\$102	\$204
444 Fish & Wildlife Equipment Revolving			
444-6 Non-Appropriated	\$129	\$129	\$258
24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc			
24N-1 State	\$8,752	\$8,740	\$17,492
001 General Fund			
001-1 State	\$20,829	\$20,469	\$41,298
001-2 Federal	\$11,252	\$12,151	\$23,403
001-7 Local	\$5,768	\$5,670	\$11,438
001 Account Total	\$37,849	\$38,290	\$76,139
104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account			
104-1 State	\$4,894	\$6,727	\$11,621
23P Model Toxics Control Operating Acct			
23P-1 State	\$136	\$136	\$272
217 Oil Spill Prevention Account			
217-1 State	\$42	\$52	\$94
01B ORV & Nonhighway Account			
01B-1 State	\$20	\$19	\$39
507 Oyster Reserve Land Account			
507-1 State	\$80	\$19	\$99

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal**

Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Account	FY 2024	FY 2025	Biennial Total
12G Rockfish Research Account			
12G-6 Non-Appropriated	\$15	\$15	\$30
110 Special Wildlife Account			
110-7 Local	\$91	\$111	\$202
09J WA Coast Crab Pot Buoy Tag Account			
09J-6 Non-Appropriated	\$6	\$6	\$12
071 Warm Water Game Fish Account			
071-1 State	\$439	\$439	\$878
14A Wildlife Rehabilitation Account			
14A-1 State	\$7	\$7	\$14
19W Wolf-Livestock Conflict Account			
19W-6 Non-Appropriated	\$30	\$30	\$60

Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment

Statewide Strategy: Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes

Expected Results

This work will result in: strong, clear agency direction and leadership; efficient agency internal operations and a skilled, productive workforce; compliance with various financial, technology and other laws and requirements; maximized value from investment in WDFW administrative operations; decreased agency financial risk; and compliance with all state, federal and local regulations regarding financial management, contracting, budget, human resources, records management, technology and technology security.

Grand Total

	FY 2024	FY 2025	Biennial Total
FTE's	2,030.5	2,050.3	2,040.4
GFS	\$182,544	\$185,148	\$367,692
Other	\$177,295	\$187,691	\$364,986
Total	\$359,839	\$372,839	\$732,678

ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory
477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

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Appropriation Period: 2023-25 Sort By: Activity

Report Number: ACT001

<u>Parameter</u>	<u>Entered As</u>
Version Source	Agency
Session	2023-25 Regular
Agency	477
Version	WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal
Result Area	All Result Areas
Activity	All Activities
Program	All Programs
Sub Program	All Sub Programs
Account	All Accounts
Expenditure Authority Type	All Expenditure Authority Types
Theme	All
Sort By	Activity
Display All Account Types	Yes
Include Policy Level	Yes
Include Activity Description	Yes
Include Statewide Result Area	Yes
Include Statewide Strategy	Yes
Include Expected Results Text	Yes
Include Charts	Yes
Chart Type	Line
Approved Only	Y
Display Parameter Page	Y

Recommendation Summary



Pacific tree frog. Photo credit: Donna Collins



Dollars in Thousands

ABS024 Recommendation Summary
Department of Fish and Wildlife
2023-25 Regular Budget Session
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

	Average Annual FTEs	General Fund State	Other Funds	Total Funds
CB T0PL Current Biennium Base	1,691.9	252,294	364,490	616,784
2021-23 Current Biennium Total	1,691.9	252,294	364,490	616,784
CL 5253 Pollinator Health	(0.5)	(184)	0	(184)
CL 5273 Shoreline Armoring	0.0	(21)	0	(21)
CL 5381 Fish Passage Project Permits	0.0	(28)	0	(28)
CL 5452 Electric-Assisted Bicycles	(0.2)	(180)	0	(180)
CL 8C Minimum Wage Adjustments	0.0	20	6	26
CL 8L Lease Adjustments	0.0	11	11	22
CL 92C Archives/Records Management	0.0	(4)	(4)	(8)
CL 92D Audit Services	0.0	2	3	5
CL 92E Legal Services	0.0	34	35	69
CL 92J CTS Central Services	0.0	87	89	176
CL 92K DES Central Services	0.0	(8)	(9)	(17)
CL 92R OFM Central Services	0.0	(743)	(774)	(1,517)
CL 9D Pension and DRS Rate Change	0.0	(10)	(16)	(26)
CL 9E01 Split Authority Btw Wildlife Accts	0.0	0	0	0
CL 9Q Equipment Maintenance and Software	0.0	(1)	1	0
CL 9S Equipment Replacement Costs	0.5	183	(1,163)	(980)
CL 9V Capital Project Operating Costs	0.0	3	0	3
CL A201 Aquatic Invasive Species	0.0	0	1	1
CL A4A Salish Sea Marine Mammal Surveys	(2.0)	(940)	0	(940)
CL A5A Salmon and Steelhead Monitoring	0.0	0	(1,682)	(1,682)
CL A5A0 PS Steelhead Fund Shift	0.0	(841)	841	0
CL A5B Zooplankton Monitoring	0.2	0	230	230
CL A5C Crab Fishery and Humpbacks	(2.0)	(285)	(285)	(570)
CL A8 Wildlife Rehabilitation	0.0	0	(300)	(300)
CL A9 Streamflow Policy Support	(4.6)	(1,037)	0	(1,037)
CL AR Appeals & Reclassified IT Positions	0.0	0	1	1
CL BS01 Increased Bighorn Sheep Management	0.0	0	(400)	(400)
CL BULL Invasive Bullfrogs	0.0	(70)	0	(70)
CL C4 Columbia River Pinniped Predation	(3.2)	(1,506)	0	(1,506)
CL CI Lake Rufus Woods Contract Increase	0.0	0	97	97
CL CLFT Climate Funding/Tribes	0.0	182	0	182
CL CR Cultural Resources Capacity	2.0	600	0	600
CL CS WSP Communication Services Increase	0.0	155	0	155
CL CSPL Coastal Steelhead Plan	0.0	(300)	0	(300)
CL CUGR Cougar Control Assistance	0.0	(100)	0	(100)
CL DC1 Monitor Dungeness Crab Harvest	3.0	710	0	710
CL DE Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	1.5	525	0	525
CL DFW1 Fish Passage City Study	0.0	0	(400)	(400)
CL ED01 Increased Elk and Deer Monitoring	(0.4)	0	(450)	(450)
CL ELK Skagit Elk Fencing	0.0	(675)	0	(675)
CL ENFC Enforcement Officers	2.0	1,400	0	1,400
CL EW01 Wildfire Habitat Recovery	(0.4)	(4,197)	0	(4,197)
CL EX01 Wildfire Suppression	0.0	(2,672)	0	(2,672)
CL FF Forage Fish Spawning Monitoring	0.1	95	0	95

ABS024 Recommendation Summary
Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

		Average Annual FTEs	General Fund State	Other Funds	Total Funds
CL FISH	Increase Fish Populations	0.0	(1,000)	0	(1,000)
CL FM	Monitor Freshwater Salmon Harvest	13.1	2,740	0	2,740
CL FP	Fish Passage Rulemaking	(0.5)	(294)	0	(294)
CL G06	State Employee Benefits	0.0	495	830	1,325
CL G09	WFSE General Government	0.0	602	1,160	1,762
CL G09X	WFSE General Government X	0.0	(512)	(1,006)	(1,518)
CL G11	Fish and Wildlife Officers Guild	0.0	467	831	1,298
CL G12	DFW Teamsters 760 Enf Sgts	0.0	124	300	424
CL G6A	Rep Employee Health Benefits	0.0	839	1,717	2,556
CL G99	Fish & Wildlife Professionals	0.0	2,520	4,040	6,560
CL G99X	Fish & Wildlife Professionals X	0.0	(2,283)	(3,882)	(6,165)
CL GL7	Coalition of Unions	0.0	356	1,106	1,462
CL GL7X	Coalition of Unions X	0.0	(370)	(1,140)	(1,510)
CL GL9	Non-Rep General Wage Increase	0.0	582	895	1,477
CL GLS	Updated PEBB Rate	0.0	315	602	917
CL GLU	PERS & TRS Plan 1 Benefit Increase	0.0	73	122	195
CL GNR	Non-Rep Law Enforcement	0.0	72	173	245
CL HP01	Hatchery Compliance	1.7	0	262	262
CL LR	Columbia Gillnet License Reduction	(0.5)	(14,400)	0	(14,400)
CL M301	Police RMS Maintenance	0.0	19	0	19
CL M9	Attorney General Rate Increase	0.0	1	(1)	0
CL MG01	Increased Mountain Goat Management	0.0	0	(139)	(139)
CL MM	Mass Marking Trailer	(0.2)	0	(1,709)	(1,709)
CL MR01	Enloe Dam Removal Plan	0.0	(250)	0	(250)
CL MR03	Western Pond Turtle Recovery	0.0	(95)	0	(95)
CL MR09	Increase RFEG	0.0	(500)	0	(500)
CL MR10	Upper Col R Salmon Reintroduction	0.0	0	(3,000)	(3,000)
CL NECG	Net Ecological Gain	0.0	(256)	0	(256)
CL PEAC	Peace Officers	0.0	(39)	0	(39)
CL PETR	Peace Officer Tactics and Equipment	(0.1)	(45)	0	(45)
CL PUF5	Physical Use of Force Standards	0.0	(29)	0	(29)
CL RECM	Recreation Lands Maintenance	0.0	5,000	0	5,000
CL RSX	Monitor Shellfish Harvest	5.0	1,040	295	1,335
CL S11	Prioritization of Fish Barriers	(0.7)	(360)	0	(360)
CL S12	Hydropower Licensing Participation	1.5	494	0	494
CL S178	Monitor Ocean & PS Salmon Harvest	4.8	402	0	402
CL S19	Monitor Commercial Salmon Harvest	1.5	94	0	94
CL S20	Marine Fisheries Compliance Liaison	0.5	226	0	226
CL S21	Increase Fisheries Enforcement	3.0	1,283	0	1,283
CL S22	Electronic Catch Record Cards	1.0	372	0	372
CL S23	Environmental Prosecution	2.5	852	0	852
CL S24	Hatchery Production Evaluation	15.5	4,283	0	4,283
CL S251	Fish Migration Monitoring	9.0	1,942	0	1,942
CL S301	Pittman-Robertson Fund Shift	0.0	(1,364)	1,364	0
CL S4A1	Elwha River Salmon Fund Shift	0.0	234	(234)	0
CL S4B	Toutle & Skamania River Hatcheries	0.0	0	(1,896)	(1,896)
CL S4B1	Toutle & Skamania Fund Shift	0.0	(948)	948	0
CL SADP	Forest Practices Adapt Mgt Review	0.0	(250)	0	(250)
CL SARP	Salmon Recovery Projects	(0.1)	(62)	0	(62)

ABS024 Recommendation Summary
Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

	Average Annual FTEs	General Fund State	Other Funds	Total Funds
CL SCWD Chronic Wasting Disease	0.0	155	0	155
CL SE Solar Expansion & Habitat Protectn	1.0	402	0	402
CL SEGC European Green Crab Control	5.7	3,596	0	3,596
CL SH1 Balance to Revenue (Account 209)	0.0	0	1	1
CL SMRT Complete Hook Mortality Study	0.0	(90)	0	(90)
CL SPNS Pinniped Study	0.0	(140)	0	(140)
CL SPNT Native Shellfish Restoration	0.0	(400)	0	(400)
CL SR Salmon Recovery and GMA Integration	4.3	1,297	0	1,297
CL SRIP Riparian Systems Assessment	0.0	(1,067)	0	(1,067)
CL SS01 Water Access Areas Maintenance	(2.3)	0	(497)	(497)
CL STR 6091 Streamflow Restoration	0.0	(1)	0	(1)
CL STRB Support of Tribal Hatcheries	0.0	(3,510)	0	(3,510)
CL TM01 Increased Turkey Mgmt & Access	(1.0)	0	(850)	(850)
CL UB01 Increased Upland Bird Habitat Mgmt	(0.8)	0	(740)	(740)
CL VETS Veterans & Military Suicide	0.1	16	0	16
CL WFRC Wolf Recovery	(1.5)	(954)	0	(954)
CL WLFA Wolf Advisory Group	0.0	(260)	0	(260)
Total Carry Forward Level	1,750.6	243,913	359,874	603,787
Percent Change from Current Biennium	3.5%	(3.3)%	(1.3)%	(2.1)%
Maintenance – Other Changes				
ML 8F Fuel Rate Adjustments	0.0	430	398	828
ML 8U Utility Rate Adjustments	0.0	220	387	607
ML 9Q Equipment Maintenance and Software	0.0	2,374	0	2,374
ML 9S Equipment Replacement Costs	0.0	1,568	0	1,568
ML 9V Capital Project Operating Costs	1.8	422	0	422
ML CA County and Other Assessments	0.0	426	0	426
ML EW Ongoing Essential Work	37.9	12,836	0	12,836
ML FC Survey Flight Cost Increases	0.0	152	130	282
ML FE Fisheries Enforcement Compliance	9.1	4,036	0	4,036
ML HF Hatchery Fish Food Cost Increases	0.0	232	808	1,040
ML PA Increased Pamphlet Costs	0.0	0	330	330
ML PP Pro-Equity, Anti-Racism (PEAR)	2.0	696	0	696
ML RF Required Facilities GASB Info	1.0	0	310	310
ML RI Reclassified IT Positions	0.0	76	37	113
ML RW Contract and Purchasing Workload	1.0	290	0	290
ML SH Monitor Shellfish Harvest	1.3	1,404	0	1,404
ML ST Building Salmon Team Capacity	3.0	1,034	0	1,034
ML WA Mass Marking Wage Adjustment	0.0	1,548	0	1,548
ML WR Wildlife Rehabilitation	0.0	0	300	300
ML ZM Zooplankton Monitoring Program	0.5	1,008	0	1,008
Maintenance – Other Total	57.6	28,752	2,700	31,452
Total Maintenance Level	1,808.2	272,665	362,574	635,239
Percent Change from Current Biennium	6.9%	8.1%	(.5)%	3.0%
Policy – Other Changes				

ABS024 Recommendation Summary
Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

	Average Annual FTEs	General Fund State	Other Funds	Total Funds
PL BA Body Cameras and Public Records	4.0	1,589	0	1,589
PL BC Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW	11.8	5,306	0	5,306
PL CM Critical Infrastructure Maintenance	8.6	3,542	0	3,542
PL CN Building a Carbon-Neutral WDFW	2.5	1,752	0	1,752
PL EF Emerging Fishery Implementation	5.3	3,133	0	3,133
PL EM Emerging Toxics in Chinook and Orca	4.5	0	2,412	2,412
PL EV Engaging Volunteers in Conservation	7.0	2,314	0	2,314
PL GS Geoduck Stock Assessment	4.0	1,330	0	1,330
PL HA Hatchery Investment Strategy	5.1	4,970	0	4,970
PL HP HPA Permitting System Replacement	2.0	7,338	0	7,338
PL LS Legacy Systems Replacement	2.0	1,428	0	1,428
PL MT Fish Passage Maintenance Team	5.0	1,482	0	1,482
PL PE Columbia River ESA Permitting	4.0	1,394	0	1,394
PL RB Restoring Washington's Biodiversity	128.3	47,596	0	47,596
PL SL Manage Impacts to State Lands	3.6	1,310	0	1,310
PL WC Expand Wildlife Conflict Response	33.3	9,899	0	9,899
PL WD Wildlife Disease Surveillance	1.4	644	0	644
Policy – Other Total	232.3	95,027	2,412	97,439
Subtotal - Policy Level Changes	232.3	95,027	2,412	97,439
2023-25 Total Policy Level	2,040.4	367,692	364,986	732,678
Percent Change from Current Biennium	20.6%	45.7%	.1%	18.8%

ABS024 Recommendation Summary
Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

ML 8F Fuel Rate Adjustments

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) must travel across the state to remote locations to fulfill the Department's mission of preserving, protecting and perpetuating fish and wildlife. In fiscal year 2022 the Department experienced increased fuel costs. These cost increases impact project budgets and cannot be absorbed without compromising work. This proposal requests funding for the increased fuel costs the Department experienced in fiscal year 2022, ongoing. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ML 8U Utility Rate Adjustments

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) requests funding to meet increased utility costs at all facilities. Without funding to offset increased electricity, natural gas, sewer, garbage, and heating oil costs, key activities protecting Washington's fish, wildlife, and ecosystems will decline, including salmon and trout production. Moreover, WDFW hatcheries produce fish that support Washington's tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries, contribute to recovery efforts for salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and contribute significantly to the state economy. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ML 9Q Equipment Maintenance and Software

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) faces increasing costs for mission-critical technologies, such as hardware leases and data backup solutions. WDFW requests additional funding to maintain these essential functions for daily operations without compromising core Departmental activities. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ML 9S Equipment Replacement Costs

Each year, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) must clip and tag more than 100 million hatchery-produced Chinook and coho. The clipped adipose fin indicates the fish originated from a hatchery, and the tag identifies which hatchery. This process is most efficiently accomplished with automatic trailers with the AutoFish system. Of the eleven trailers WDFW owns, three are approaching their end of useful life. This request will fund the replacement purchase of one trailer per biennium thereby allowing WDFW to maintain current hatchery production levels. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ML 9V Capital Project Operating Costs

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) enters into land leases or management agreements to further the Department's mission to secure prime habitat that meets conservation values or provides increased recreational opportunities to the public. The Department received approval to purchase new lands through the capital budget, which means the Department's obligation for operations and maintenance (O&M) on wildlife lands will increase in the 2023-2025 biennium. This proposal identifies the land acquisitions from the capital budget and requests ongoing funding to operate and maintain these lands.

ML CA County and Other Assessments

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) owns over one million acres of land throughout Washington State. These lands are subject to general assessments, which include county and non-county; water service agreements and various assessments such as weed, irrigation, lake management district, dike, and fire protection assessments. Additionally, the Department leases land from private, local, federal, and state entities for conservation and migration of certain species. These assessments have risen, and this package seeks funding for the increased costs to maintain land continuity for the public to recreate, hunt, fish, and view wildlife. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ABS024 Recommendation Summary
Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

ML EW Ongoing Essential Work

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) received one-time funding for priority work in the 2021-23 Biennial and 2022 Supplemental Budgets. This decision package requests these efforts to be funded ongoing, and at the originally requested levels to maintain efforts that benefit all Washingtonians through continued work and retained expertise for these subjects. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ML FC Survey Flight Cost Increases

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) uses charter air services for animal capture, radio tracking, and aerial surveying to help preserve and protect Washington's fish and wildlife. The Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (DES) master contract manages the different charter air services available. Due to an economic adjustment, the master contract experienced a 10.17% price increase for the fiscal year 2023. WDFW is requesting funds to help cover the increased costs incurred this fiscal year due to the applied economic adjustment. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ML FE Fisheries Enforcement Compliance

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) received funding in the 2022 Supplemental Operating Budget to increase fishery enforcement compliance. The original proposal increased funding and staffing levels strategically between the first and second years to ensure that the Enforcement Program had capacity to grow strategically. The Department only received partial funding for this proposal because the increase in year two funding and staff was not included in the enacted carryforward level budget. To increase officer presence as intended, the Department is requesting the remaining funding and staff, ongoing. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ML HF Hatchery Fish Food Cost Increases

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) hatcheries produce fish that support Washington's tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries and contribute to fish recovery efforts listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). WDFW requests funding and spending authority to meet fish food costs that continue to rise due to the global market conditions associated with fish food production. Without funding to offset increased fish food costs, salmon and trout plants into local waters will likely be reduced and/or potential hatchery closure(s) may be needed. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ML PA Increased Pamphlet Costs

The physical copies of regulation pamphlets and booklets that the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) provides are essential for Washington's citizens and the fish and game license dealers throughout the state. Printing regulation pamphlets and booklets is an unavoidable cost for the Department per RCW 77.12.184. This proposal requests increasing printing and shipping funding to provide, inform and promote access to fishing and game activities in all regions of the state. The Department's ability to provide paper pamphlets supports public opportunities to enjoy and participate in recreational fishing and hunting opportunities and allows the public the ability to achieve a stress-free experience, balanced with the confidence they are following regulations. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ML PP Pro-Equity, Anti-Racism (PEAR)

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is committed to creating a Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) ecosystem in Washington state as outlined in Executive Order 22-04. The Department recognizes the unique environmental justice role it has in managing and allocating the state's fish and wildlife resources. However, WDFW does not have the capacity to implement the PEAR Plan and Playbook as intended by the governor. WDFW proposes funding two new positions to expand its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) subject matter experts to accommodate the new planning and reporting requirements of the PEAR Act. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ABS024 Recommendation Summary
Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

ML RF Required Facilities GASB Info

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is committed to meeting the Office of Financial Management's (OFM) requirements of the Statewide Facilities Inventory Policy. Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 87 Leases; requires agencies to record detailed information about all state-owned and leased facilities in the Facilities Portfolio Management Tool (FPMT) to comply with RCW 43.82.150. However, WDFW does not currently have capacity to meet these requirements. To comply with the Statewide Facilities Inventory Policy, WDFW requires additional staff for location surveys and data entry.

ML RI Reclassified IT Positions

During the 2019-21 biennium the Legislature provided increased funding to state government agencies for the information technology (IT) workforce. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) received additional funding in the 2021-23 Biennial budget and the 2022 Supplemental budget. Following the creation of the IT Professional Structure, state employees were reclassified. Many employees across the state pursued a reevaluation of their job classification by appealing the initial placement. Funding provided in the 2020 Supplemental budget was intended to fully fund the statewide reclassification process; however, it was insufficient to cover the increased costs from subsequent appeals and final placements. WDFW is requesting funding for increased compensation costs for the final four information technology positions to meet its obligation to compensate these employees at the rate determined by the State Human Resources (SHR).

ML RW Contract and Purchasing Workload

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is committed to addressing equity in public spending; however, the Contract and Purchasing Division does not currently have capacity or specialized skill set to comply with recent Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) expectations and recommendations. To address this issue, the Department proposes funding an additional position dedicated to the DEI components of contracts and purchasing. This position will also alleviate the current DEI-related workload from existing staff that has been accumulating. Funding a new position with specialized skills in DEI and contracts and purchasing will allow the Department to meet requirements.

ML SH Monitor Shellfish Harvest

Climate change, record fisheries participation, and a rapidly growing human population in the Puget Sound region are putting Puget Sound shellfish resources under increasing and unprecedented pressure. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) requests full carry-forward level (CFL) funding and full-time equivalents (FTEs) to provide ongoing support to the Puget Sound Shellfish Program. Ongoing funding and FTEs are necessary to address short and long-term needs, to adapt to evolving management conditions, to continue to meet tribal co-management obligations, and to continue to ensure the healthy shellfish populations the people of Washington expect. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ML ST Building Salmon Team Capacity

Salmon management requires extensive data and analysis to understand fisheries impacts and maintain fishing opportunities. Tribal co-management, coupled with ensuring salmon fisheries are compliant with Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Pacific Salmon Treaty requirements, requires a broad understanding of salmon science, policy, tribal law, and how they intersect. This proposal adds strategically focused staff that enhance Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) ability to add higher-level quantitative analysis and scientific rigor that supports salmon conservation. These key staff will also support both internal collaboration with cross-program science and policy, as well as external communication with stakeholders. These positions also support the public's understanding of policy and management decisions, which leads to improved outcomes. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ABS024 Recommendation Summary
Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

ML WA Mass Marking Wage Adjustment

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is required by state law to clip the adipose fin of millions of juvenile hatchery Chinook and coho salmon intended for harvest, a process known as mass-marking. This proposal requests funding for the critical staff hired through a private temporary labor firm to conduct yearly mass-marking activities. Without additional funding to support these cost increases, the ability to release hatchery salmon that support Washington's fish populations, endangered Southern Resident killer whales, and the economy will decline. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation].

ML WR Wildlife Rehabilitation

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) wildlife rehabilitation program is nationally respected, but Washington does not have enough wildlife rehabilitation capacity to address the public's desire to help wildlife or provide for wildlife needs. The Department previously requested additional expenditure authority in Fund 14A – "Wildlife Rehabilitation Account." This was a one-time funding request for fiscal years 2021-2025. However, the Department only received one-time funding for the 2021-23 biennium. Given the available fund balance, this request is to increase expenditure authority in the 2023-25 biennium to complete the initial proposal as intended. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ML ZM Zooplankton Monitoring Program

Zooplankton are a cornerstone of the marine food web and a well-grounded indicator of ecosystem function. Zooplankton populations can effectively capture the relationship between physical and biological ecosystem changes, creating a better understanding how physical stressors, manmade and natural, are affecting the entire Puget Sound food web. The purpose of this package is to maintain the zooplankton monitoring program, so it continues to measure the prey field for salmon and other fish and how it correlates with survival, and provides improved forecasting tools and guidance toward management decisions to set harvest expectations and optimize recovery strategies. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL BA Body Cameras and Public Records

Investments in body worn camera (BWC) technologies support contemporary policies in law enforcement transparency and reduce officer safety liabilities. These devices are essential tools that support public expectations regarding police interactions and accountability. By providing audio and video footage BWCs affirm or refute claims of wrongdoing, resolving the potential for frivolous lawsuits and needless investments in internal investigations that detract from the primary mission of public service. As fully commissioned police officers, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Enforcement officers need to be equipped with BWCs to advance public safety. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL BC Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is already experiencing climate change impacts, which will continue to get worse over the coming decades. This package will increase capacity to continue to fulfill four aspects of the Department's mission most vulnerable to climate change: (1) guide species recovery efforts, (2) provide harvest and recreation opportunities, (3) provide technical assistance, permitting, and planning support, and (4) manage agency lands and infrastructure. 'Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW' is designed to address these four vulnerabilities through investments in research, capacity building, community engagement, evaluation, and monitoring across WDFW's projects and programs. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL CM Critical Infrastructure Maintenance

ABS024 Recommendation Summary
Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) operates dozens of fish hatcheries around the state. Maintaining facilities and infrastructure will reduce maintenance problems by focusing on prevention rather than cure, resulting in significant cost savings. Well-maintained facilities ensure day-to-day operations are efficient and cost effective; minimize workplace hazard for staff and the public; and mitigate production disruptions and potential catastrophic loss of state resources, such as a recent equipment failure that resulted in the loss of 5 million fish. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL CN Building a Carbon-Neutral WDFW

Climate change is negatively impacting fish, wildlife, and communities, and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) operations contribute to climate change. Current law (Revised Code of Washington 70A.45.050) requires state agencies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. In response, the "Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Sustainability Plan" was developed. This package funds the first biennium of Sustainability Plan implementation by catalyzing transition of the Department's vehicle fleet to electricity and alternative fuels, advancing energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, creating a Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) program, and supporting foundational research and capacity-building. This package is projected to reduce the agency's emissions 29.5% by 2025, putting WDFW on track to comply with the next required tier of reducing emissions 45% by 2030. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL EF Emerging Fishery Implementation

There is increased political and social pressure to diversify gears used in the lower Columbia River commercial fishery, especially gears with mark-selective capabilities. With an Emerging Commercial Fishery, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife could assess the viability of alternative gears in a commercial setting. This request will fund commercial alternative gear research to inform fishery implementation questions, monitoring for the emerging commercial fishery, and create a source of funds for the purchase and optimization of gear. Without funding, the Department will not be able to adequately monitor this emerging fishery further explore the viability of alternative commercial gears, or to incentivize the expanded use of mark-selective commercial gear.

PL EM Emerging Toxics in Chinook and Orca

Southern Resident killer whales, (hereafter referred to as Southern Resident orcas), Chinook salmon, forage fish, and other species in Puget Sound are exposed to thousands of toxic chemicals, from the water they swim in and the prey they eat. This investment would allow the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to track Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CECs) in the orca and salmon food web. This work leverages WDFW's existing long-term toxics monitoring program by adding funds to analyze CECs in already collected tissue samples. This important research will accelerate recovery and protection of endangered orcas and threatened Chinook salmon by identifying the location and sources of CEC exposure, which is critical to reducing toxic chemicals in Puget Sound. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL EV Engaging Volunteers in Conservation

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) volunteer program engages community members in meaningful service that helps to protect fish, wildlife, and their habitat, and provide sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities. WDFW lacks the necessary volunteer coordination to meet the demand for volunteer opportunities, which limits our ability to engage additional volunteers and develop new partnerships. Dedicated volunteer coordinators in each of WDFW's six regions and a community science coordinator would allow us to expand volunteer opportunities by 25%, increase volunteer hours by 50%, and improve volunteer retention rate by 10%. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL GS Geoduck Stock Assessment

ABS024 Recommendation Summary
Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

This proposal requests a change to the current funding structure for important geoduck stock assessment and research, in which Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife staff are funded through a Washington State Department of Natural Resources contract, by providing a direct appropriation to WDFW. Fully funding this workload supports the sustainability of this unique fishery and ensures that the state meets tribal co-manager obligations. The geoduck fishery is the source of tens of millions of dollars in annual direct revenue for the state, as well as economic opportunity for tribal and non-tribal participants. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL HA Hatchery Investment Strategy

This proposal will support increased needs at hatchery facilities for current and expanded production which includes fish health, adult collection, and mass-marking. If not funded, hatchery production goals may not be met, fish health will not be staffed adequately to monitor state and commercial aquaculture, and fish intended for harvest will not be mass marked. This funding ensures ongoing measures to support recreational and commercial harvest, tribal harvest, Southern Resident killer whale prey, and conservation efforts for wild salmonids. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL HP HPA Permitting System Replacement

In 2014, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) deployed the online Aquatic Protection Permitting System (APPS) to manage Hydraulic Project Approvals (HPAs). The software platform, built and maintained by a vendor, shows signs of non-functionality. The outdated system prevents HPA business process improvements, and recent systemic maintenance problems jeopardize the issuance of permits within the statutory 45-day timeline. If not replaced soon, there is a continual risk of complete collapse of the statewide system used by permit applicants, agency staff, and other interested parties pursuant to RCW 77.55.351. This request is to complete a past feasibility analysis and build a new system to efficiently manage HPAs. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL LS Legacy Systems Replacement

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) requests funding for feasibility and market research analysis to begin replacing outdated systems. The results of the analysis will be used to determine the legacy systems to be replaced in future budget requests. Legacy systems are difficult and costly to maintain, vulnerable to cybersecurity attacks, and put the Department at risk of service disruption. Replacing obsolete systems will improve the quality and efficiency of applications, enhance cybersecurity, reduce risk, and will allow the Department to respond to evolving business needs. This will allow WDFW to lifecycle its custom-built solutions to modernize how WDFW conducts its business and further enable the Department's digital transformation through phased improvements to first generation-technical solutions. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL MT Fish Passage Maintenance Team

Fishways and fish screens have been required to provide passage for migrating fish in Washington since the 1890s. Hundreds of state, federal, and private fishways and fish screens provide passage for millions of migratory fish. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) owns 100 fishways that provide access to 1,768 miles of spawning and rearing habitat, and over 100 fish screens that protect downstream migrating fish, many of which need repairs. This funding request reestablishes operation and maintenance capacity for state fish passage facilities and technical assistance for owners of passage infrastructure to prevent fish mortality during migration. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL PE Columbia River ESA Permitting

ABS024 Recommendation Summary
Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

This proposal expands staffing capacity within the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to complete necessary federal fishery permits and obtain complete Endangered Species Act (ESA) coverage to maximize recreational fishing opportunities for salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River Basin. Due to the year-round presence of listed salmon and steelhead, WDFW is legally required to have ESA coverage to prosecute recreational fisheries in the Columbia River Basin. Current staffing levels are inadequate and would take a decade or more to complete all necessary federal ESA permits. Consequences of not completing federal permits include increased litigation risk, inability to open new fisheries, and/or potentially closing existing fisheries.

PL RB Restoring Washington's Biodiversity

Habitat loss and degradation, climate change effects, pollution, wildlife disease, and invasive species threaten the state's biodiversity. Fish and wildlife are public resources, and it is the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) mandate to conserve them for current and future residents of Washington. WDFW needs funding to stem the tide of biodiversity loss and accelerate our work with partners to implement the State Wildlife Action Plan and other protection and recovery efforts in Washington's most important habitats. We aim to develop and implement action plans for 80% of at-risk species and increase public participation in conservation by 25%. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL SL Manage Impacts to State Lands

To make informed management decisions that meet conservation goals for public lands, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is partnering with Washington State Parks, Washington Department of Natural Resources and tribal co-managers in seeking resources to develop a data management system, a plan to improve public access opportunities for all people, and an implementation strategy for that plan. This work requires data to be collected, managed, and analyzed on how outdoor recreation climate change, weeds, and other factors impact fish and wildlife habitat. This investment will advance more informed decision making based on best science and publicly shared indicators of the ecological health of public lands, creating a balance between conservation and the increasing demand for outdoor recreation. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL WC Expand Wildlife Conflict Response

As Washington's population continues to grow, human-wildlife interactions and conflicts increase. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) seeks to build capacity by consolidating and expanding its response to conflicts. Wildlife conflict specialists will be available daily to address crop damage and dangerous wildlife interactions, while increasing preventative education and outreach and freeing enforcement officer time for other priority duties. Consolidation and improved response will reduce agriculture and livestock producer frustrations, decrease costly claims for damage payments, and allow for a seamless response and follow-through to dangerous wildlife conflicts including human-black bear and human-cougar. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

PL WD Wildlife Disease Surveillance

The impacts of a warming climate on human, animal, and environmental health are real. For example, climate change enhances the spread of vector-borne diseases (e.g., West Nile Virus) through altered geographic and seasonal patterns of disease vectors. Minimizing the negative impacts of climate change are a priority for Washington's Governor. If funded, this proposal will expand the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) capacity to proactively mitigate wildlife disease risks associated with climate change and provide action plans and management for healthy wildlife in our state. [This package is related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

ABS024 Recommendation Summary
Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal
Dollars in Thousands

Report Number: ABS024

Input Parameters	Entered as
Session	2023-25 Regular
Agency	477
Version Source	A
Version	WDFW
Version Option	(None)
Program	Agency Level
Roll Up	N
Include Budget Level Detail	CL,ML,PL
Include Text	Y
For Word	N
Display Parameter Page	Y

Maintenance Level Decision Packages



Aerial view of Satsop River. Photo credit: WDFW Staff



Department of Fish and Wildlife
 2023-25 Regular Budget Session
 Maintenance Level - 8F - Fuel Rate Adjustments

Agency Recommendation Summary

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) must travel across the state to remote locations to fulfill the Department’s mission of preserving, protecting and perpetuating fish and wildlife. In fiscal year 2022 the Department experienced increased fuel costs. These cost increases impact project budgets and cannot be absorbed without compromising work. This proposal requests funding for the increased fuel costs the Department experienced in fiscal year 2022, ongoing. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$215	\$215	\$430	\$215	\$215	\$430
Fund 001 - 2	\$40	\$40	\$80	\$40	\$40	\$80
Fund 001 - 7	\$14	\$14	\$28	\$14	\$14	\$28
Fund 02R - 1	\$21	\$21	\$42	\$21	\$21	\$42
Fund 071 - 1	\$3	\$3	\$6	\$3	\$3	\$6
Fund 104 - 1	\$7	\$7	\$14	\$7	\$7	\$14
Fund 110 - 7	\$4	\$4	\$8	\$4	\$4	\$8
Fund 21S - 1	\$1	\$1	\$2	\$1	\$1	\$2
Fund 24N - 1	\$109	\$109	\$218	\$109	\$109	\$218
Total Expenditures	\$414	\$414	\$828	\$414	\$414	\$828
Revenue						
001 - 0315	\$40	\$40	\$80	\$40	\$40	\$80
001 - 0549	\$14	\$14	\$28	\$14	\$14	\$28
Total Revenue	\$54	\$54	\$108	\$54	\$54	\$108

Decision Package Description

In state fiscal year 2021 the average cost of fuel per gallon in Washington state was \$2.97; in state fiscal year 2022 this increased by \$1.24, bringing the average to \$4.21. Fuel rates have been fluctuating, however the price increase in 2022 is significant, as shown in Figure 1: Average Fuel Cost per Gallon. During the COVID-19 pandemic the Department saw a decrease in fuel consumption, which mitigated the increasing costs of fuel. However, in state fiscal year 2022 the Department’s mileage started to increase to pre-pandemic levels. Even though the mileage was still less than previous fiscal years, the Department experienced increased fuel expenses by \$414,000. See Table 1: Actual Expenditures, below:

Table 1: Actual Expenditures				
Fiscal Year	2019	2020	2021	2022
Average number of Gallons	541,584	503,308	502,883	474,160
Average Cost per Gallon	3.25	2.97	2.97	4.21
Total Cost per Fiscal Year	1,771,279	1,500,233	1,505,314	2,006,642

Table 1: Actual Expenditures: This table shows the increase in the average cost per gallon in 2022, which caused a significant inflationary cost increase to the Department. The data is sourced from US Department of Energy, US Energy Information Administration.

These inflationary cost increases impact the Department’s ability to complete work as budgeted, and the Department does not have the ability to absorb these costs elsewhere without compromising mission work or long-term sustainability. WDFW requires additional funding ongoing to absorb these inflationary fuel cost increases.

Figure 1: Average Fuel Cost Per Gallon

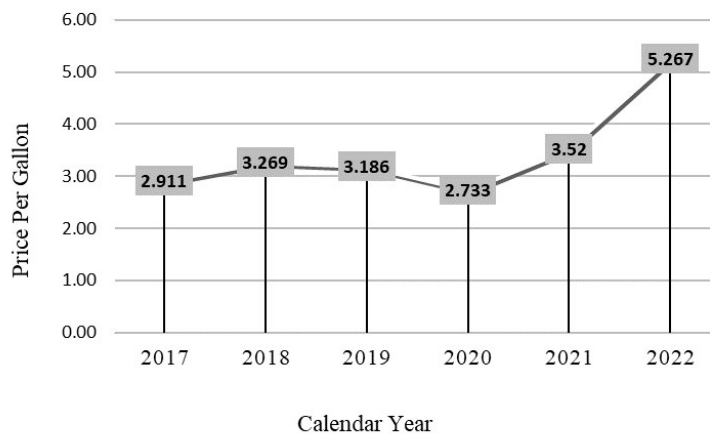


Figure 1: Average Fuel Cost Per Gallon: The average price of fuel (of all grades, and all formulas) increased by 49% from calendar year 2021 to June 2022.

WDFW proposes ongoing funding to accommodate the inflationary fuel cost increases. Without this funding the Department will have to absorb the inflationary cost increases into base budgets, however something will have to get cut elsewhere. This funding is spread across multiple accounts and will impact different programs and projects, which could impact capacity to do work.

WDFW continues to work diligently to adopt strategies for efficiently managing the vehicle fleet. To be efficient as possible, the Department leases 711 vehicles from DES Motor Pool Services, some of which are hybrid. The Department has long term plans to incorporate more hybrid vehicles where applicable, but it is not a feasible solution in the short term to address these fuel cost increases. Without this funding there will be an increasing gap that will ultimately contribute to a structural deficit. It is important to the Department that operational services are not cut due to these of increased fuel prices.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This request is not an expansion or alteration of a current program or service

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

In fiscal year 2022, the average cost per gallon of fuel increased by \$1.24. Although the Department used 28,000 fewer gallons of fuel in fiscal year 2022 than the previous year, the increased price of fuel raised the total expenditures by 33%. Using a three-year average of fuel rates from fiscal years 2019, 2020 and 2021 the Department spent an average of \$1,592,000. In fiscal year 2022 the Department spent \$2,006,000, a difference of \$414,000. This decision package requests the difference in inflationary fuel costs ongoing to pay for these fixed operating expenses.

Table 2: Fuel Cost Expenditures	
Fiscal Year	Expenditures
Average of Fiscal Years 19, 20 & 21	\$1,592,000
Fiscal Year 2022	\$2,006,000
Difference	\$414,000

Table 2: Fuel Cost Expenditures: To calculate the difference, an average of the last three fiscal years was used to establish a more stable estimate. Fiscal year 2022 expenditures are actuals as of fiscal month 12 close.

Workforce Assumptions:

N/A

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

This decision package supports the state’s ability to achieve Results Washington goals number 5: Efficient, Effective, and Accountable Government. This proposal is fundamental to the Department’s ability to provide essential services.

This decision package directly supports the Department’s 25-Year Strategic Plan strategy “Proactively Address Conservation Challenges,” and “Model operational and environmental excellence.” This maintenance level decision package addresses the inflationary cost increases that can interrupt current levels of service.

Manage Fishing Opportunities - \$203,000 State General Fund, \$126,000; Fish & Wildlife & Conservation Account, \$76,000; Aquatic Invasive Species, \$1,000

Produce Hatchery Fish - \$153,000 State General Fund, \$109,000; ALEA, \$16,000; Special Wildlife Account, \$5000; Fish & Wildlife & Conservation Account, \$23,000

Manage Hunting Opportunities - \$58,000 State General Fund, \$35,000; ALEA, \$4,000; Special Wildlife Account, \$4000; Limited Fish and Wildlife Account, \$5,000; Fish & Wildlife & Conservation Account, \$10,000

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department’s ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- 000979 Priority research needs being met
- 001211 Aquatic invasive species in the state
- 001538 Acres of protected fish and wildlife habitat
- 001976 Value of commercial fishing in Washington State
- 002319 Percentage of mission-critical business systems supported

These performance outcomes are most closely impacted by increased fuel rate costs; however, almost all parts of the Department’s budget will be impacted due to the nature of these inflationary fuel costs impacting the Department’s ability to conduct surveys, enforce fish and wildlife laws, and serve the public.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

Maintenance level decision packages are frequently inwardly focused. This funding request is responding to the increased cost of fuel over the past year. Without additional funding for this increased costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not directly connected to specific communities, however cutting services, and shifting resources will hinder the Department’s ability to apply an equitable lens and meet citizens where they are due to reduced ability to travel.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support specific communities such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted groups. The Department is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems to be sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities and many others are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents.

Target Populations or Communities:

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Communications and Public Engagement divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain these functions to ensure there is not degradation of services to the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying inflationary fuel rate increases that will have a negative impact on the Department’s business operations and restrict mission critical work or advances/improvements throughout the Department and impacts our ability to meet citizens where they are and better serve the public.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

For WDFW and its ongoing programs to succeed in implementing the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategies increased costs of fuel need to be accounted for in a way that does not detract from budgets directed to Puget Sound recovery programs. This decision package to address the inflationary increases in fuel costs is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy A Funding by ensuring fuel costs do not detract from Puget Sound recovery funding.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

N/A

Stakeholder Response:

N/A

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. E	\$414	\$414	\$828	\$414	\$414	\$828

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Department of Fish and Wildlife
2023-25 Regular Budget Session
Maintenance Level - 8U - Utility Rate Adjustments

Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) requests funding to meet increased utility costs at all facilities. Without funding to offset increased electricity, natural gas, sewer, garbage, and heating oil costs, key activities protecting Washington's fish, wildlife, and ecosystems will decline, including salmon and trout production. Moreover, WDFW hatcheries produce fish that support Washington's tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries, contribute to recovery efforts for salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and contribute significantly to the state economy. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$110	\$110	\$220	\$110	\$110	\$220
Fund 001 - 2	\$67	\$68	\$135	\$68	\$68	\$136
Fund 001 - 7	(\$14)	(\$14)	(\$28)	(\$14)	(\$14)	(\$28)
Fund 02R - 1	\$61	\$61	\$122	\$61	\$61	\$122
Fund 04M - 1	\$6	\$6	\$12	\$6	\$6	\$12
Fund 098 - 1	(\$1)	(\$1)	(\$2)	(\$1)	(\$1)	(\$2)
Fund 104 - 1	(\$557)	(\$557)	(\$1,114)	(\$557)	(\$557)	(\$1,114)
Fund 110 - 1	(\$1)	(\$1)	(\$2)	(\$1)	(\$1)	(\$2)
Fund 110 - 7	\$2	\$2	\$4	\$2	\$2	\$4
Fund 21S - 1	(\$3)	(\$3)	(\$6)	(\$3)	(\$3)	(\$6)
Fund 24N - 1	\$633	\$633	\$1,266	\$633	\$633	\$1,266
Total Expenditures	\$303	\$304	\$607	\$304	\$304	\$608
Revenue						
001 - 0315	\$67	\$68	\$135	\$68	\$68	\$136
001 - 0549	(\$14)	(\$14)	(\$28)	(\$14)	(\$14)	(\$28)
Total Revenue	\$53	\$54	\$107	\$54	\$54	\$108

Decision Package Description

Washington's facilities and hatcheries are essential to WDFW's mission to maintain fish and wildlife populations and a significant contributor to the Washington state economy. Utilities (electricity, natural gas, sewer, garbage, and heating oil) play a crucial role in the production of salmon, trout, and game fish at WDFW's 80 hatchery facilities. In addition, fish production supports tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries in Washington and recovery and conservation programs for ESA-listed fish populations.

An essential part of WDFW successfully maintaining fish and wildlife populations is the appropriately functioning the Department's facilities and hatcheries. One of the largest needed expenditure classes for these locations is their utilities. In fiscal year 2022, WDFW had \$2.76 million in utility expenditures, a 13.06% increase over the previous biennium's average yearly utility expenditure. The 2021-23 biennium projected utility costs are based on historical billings with no inflationary increase adjustment. The result is a projected shortfall of \$303,000 in fiscal year 2024 and then a subsequent shortfall of \$304,000 each year after that. This additional funding request will allow WDFW to continue critical activities of managing habitats, maintaining current hatchery production levels, and supporting increased hatchery production requested by the Legislature.

Without additional funding, WDFW will have to move funds from other areas to cover the essential utility costs needed to run our facilities and hatcheries. This could potentially have a negative impact on the Department's ability to maintain current production levels at hatcheries, which will adversely affect fisheries jobs and the ability to meet federal treaty obligations and damage local economic development via tourism, lodging, and recreational equipment sales tied to fishing. In addition, WDFW serves 772,000 recreational fishing customers (2020), and commercial fishing is a leading contributor to the Washington seafood economy; a loss to hatchery production may impact these areas. For example, income from commercial harvesters in 2016 totaled \$242,998,000, while the Washington state seafood industry, including imports, generated \$2 billion in 2016 (NOAA, 2016).

National Marine Fisheries Service. 2018. Fisheries Economics of the United States, 2016. U.S. Dept. of Commerce, NOAA Tech, <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/fisherieseconomicsunitedstatesreport2016>

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

N/A

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

The attached funding model illustrates the difference between appropriated authority and current costs. In fiscal year 2022, WDFW utility expenditures were \$2.76 million, a 13.06% increase over the average of the previous biennium. The model estimates the average fund split base on the last four fiscal years. Although utilities are assumed to remain at fiscal year 2022 levels, WDFW anticipates expenditures of \$2,764,617 in fiscal year 2024 and 2025, for a total of \$5,529,234 for the 2023-25 biennium. The estimated costs are reflected in Object E, totaling \$303,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$304,000 in fiscal year 2025, ongoing.

See attached table (WDFW Utilities Model) detailing past and projected expenditures, current spending authority, and calculated appropriation needs.

Workforce Assumptions:

N/A

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor’s Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve two Results Washington goals: 1) Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment; and 2) Prosperous Economy. Producing hatchery salmon and trout helps protect marine ecosystems and support the survival of Southern Resident orcas and ESA-listed Chinook. In addition, Hatchery salmon and trout contribute to commercial and recreational fishing opportunities across the state, supporting jobs and communities that rely on the economic benefits of fishing.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This decision package supports the Department Strategic Plan strategy of "Proactively address conservation challenges," expanding current efforts to manage and recover at-risk fish and wildlife species. In addition, this proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the performance outcome:

- 25% increase in wild salmon

WDFW Activity Inventory

Utility costs are allocated to WDFW activities based on the funding source. Multiple funding sources pay for WDFW utilities (See Table 1. Budget request by fund source). WDFW requires administrative infrastructure that successfully supports the needs of staff who perform work directly in service to the mission. The Department's business management work comprehensively supports the entire agency and meets obligations by providing agency leadership and strategy, managing finance and contracts, managing human resources, and maintaining office facilities.

In addition, WDFW hatcheries produce healthy fish to benefit the citizens of Washington State while providing conservation to natural-origin salmonids, and hatchery production is critical for fishing opportunities throughout the state. The Department operates 80 hatcheries for fish production that benefit commercial and recreational fisheries and fulfill obligations to maintain tribal usual and accustomed fishing rights and co-manager management plans. The utilities rate adjustment and maintenance activities are necessary to keep facilities and hatcheries in good working order and meet different functions, including the entire fish production cycle.

Table 1. Budget request by fund source

Fund	Budget Request		
	FY2024	FY2025	Total
001-1 GF-State	\$110,000	\$110,000	\$220,000
02R-1 ALEA	\$61,000	\$61,000	\$122,000
24N-Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation	\$633,000	\$633,000	\$1,266,000
104-1 Wildlife-State	(\$557,000)	(\$557,000)	(\$1,114,000)
110-1 SWA-State	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$2,000)
098-East Wash Pheasant Enhancement Acct	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$2,000)
21S-Aquatic Invasive Species Management Acco	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)	(\$6,000)
04M-1 Rec Fisheries	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$12,000
001-2 GF-Federal	\$67,000	\$68,000	\$135,000
001-7 GF-Local	(\$14,000)	(\$14,000)	(\$28,000)
110-7 SWA-Local	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$4,000
TOTAL All Funds	\$303,000	\$304,000	\$607,000

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department’s ability to achieve the following Performance Indicators:

- Threatened and endangered species population improvements
- Value of commercial fishing in Washington State
- Total license sales achieved
- Number of angler days
- Hatchery programs in compliance with ESA

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

This funding request is responding to the utility cost increase and budget shortfall due to this increase faced by WDFW. Without additional funding to cover these increased costs, other areas of the budget could be cut, which will cause reductions in other programs and projects currently funded. These reductions are not easily connected to specific communities. However, cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equitable lens as WDFW will be forced to shift resources.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support target populations such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted communities. WDFW is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems so these resources are sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities, and many others, are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents. Washington's hatcheries support recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state and contribute significant revenue to local and rural businesses. This package supports the operation of Washington's hatcheries, which allows them to continue:

- Supporting local economies (tourism, lodging, restaurants, wholesalers, and retailers of recreational equipment, boats, and licenses),
- Providing family recreational opportunities, and
- Protecting Washington's fishing cultural heritage.

Commercial and recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state contribute significant revenue to local and rural businesses.

Target Populations or Communities:

WDFW completes community engagement and public outreach through public engagement. The Communication divisions are committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that WDFW can maintain these functions to prevent degrading services for the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying non-discretionary cost increases that will have a negative impact on the business operations of WDFW and restrict mission-critical work.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods by ensuring WDFW's continued hatchery production of salmon and game fish across the state despite increased utility costs, to increase populations consistent with recovery efforts. Through these efforts this decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID#205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity Work to reduce risk to wild populations by balancing the potential risks and benefits of hatchery production, and by conducting research on hatchery infrastructure and management to reduce the fitness differential between hatchery and wild populations. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

WDFW hatchery production is a crucial element of fisheries co-management with tribes, collaborating and working with community partners to reach WDFW conservation principles.

Stakeholder Response:

WDFW hatcheries and facilities operate across the state, and WDFW anticipates support from stakeholders, which include tribes, recreational and commercial fisheries, conservation groups, and the public.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

Reference Documents

[WDFW Utilities Model.pdf](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. E	\$303	\$304	\$607	\$304	\$304	\$608

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) faces increasing costs for mission-critical technologies, such as hardware leases and data backup solutions. WDFW requests additional funding to maintain these essential functions for daily operations without compromising core Departmental activities. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$1,176	\$1,198	\$2,374	\$1,198	\$1,198	\$2,396
Total Expenditures	\$1,176	\$1,198	\$2,374	\$1,198	\$1,198	\$2,396

Decision Package Description

At the current budgeted level, WDFW is only able to fund a portion of some of its most basic technological tools that allow staff to perform core Department work. As the Department faces increasing costs for foundational technology tools, those that enable all staff to deliver work products, it is attempting to minimize expenditures when possible. However, even with this fiscally conscious approach, WDFW is experiencing an increase in operation costs.

Hardware Leases: \$525,000

WDFW has shifted to a mobile workforce, and in alignment with the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) Statewide IT Strategic Plan, the Department has replaced most of its leased PC desktops with mobile PC laptops, as desktops reach end of lease. WDFW currently leases over 2,500 PCs, laptops, servers, and tablets from the Department of Enterprise Services (DES) that are used by WDFW staff statewide.

Lease costs for the Dell Latitude 5400 series has increased from \$47.15 per month to \$56.00 per month, an 18.77% increase.

PC & Server Lease Cost	
2019-21 BN	\$2,383,000
2021-23 BN	\$2,798,000
2023-25 BN	\$3,323,000
Increase	\$525,000

Radio Cost Increase – DNR Radio Share Agreement: \$21,000

WDFW Police use an internal dispatch center (WILDCOMM) and the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) radio network as their primary communication methods.

The Radio Share Agreement between DNR and WDFW is for radio system sharing and technical services, which includes IP network sharing, radio maintenance services, and additional radio projects, such as increasing capacity, improving coverage, and modifying radio system components. The current contractual agreement stipulates radio costs will increase 3% in fiscal year 2023, and email communication indicates WDFW should expect an increase of 3% annually in subsequent years, totaling \$224,000 in fiscal year 2023, \$231,000 in fiscal year 2024, and \$238,000 in fiscal year 2025, respectively.

Radio Share Cost	
2017-19 BN	\$390,000
2019-21 BN	\$438,000
2021-23 BN	\$448,000
2023-25 BN	\$469,000
Increase	\$21,000

VPN Services: \$59,000

VPN costs have increased substantially due to the telework mandate that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic. WaTech initially covered the

increase, but WDFW assumed the new costs starting in March 2020. This complies with OCIO Securing IT Assets Policy 141.10. Without providing employees VPN access, they would not be able to access WDFW’s network in off-site locations.

VPN Cost	
2019-21 BN	\$223,000
2021-23 BN	\$274,000
2023-25 BN	\$333,000
Increase	\$59,000

DocuSign: \$48,000

DocuSign is a software service that allows verified electronic signatures for agency documents. WDFW started using DocuSign at the end of fiscal year (FY) 2020 in response to the COVID19 Stay at Home Order. This software became critical during the telework mandate as a way for staff to sign documents from remote locations. It also modernizes the workplace, reduces paper consumption, and increases operational efficiencies.

As DFW staff continue to work remotely, and as paper processes are digitized, DocuSign usage has increased accordingly. DocuSign is billed based on how many “envelopes” (completed signature packets) are completed. DFW has increased the envelope limit to meet DFW demand.

DocuSign Cost	
2019-21 BN	\$180,000
2021-23 BN	\$228,000
Increase	\$48,000

Novatus Contracts Software: \$85,000

Novatus is a mission critical SaaS software that WDFW uses to manage the entire lifecycle of local and federal contracts and grants. The current contractual agreement specifically exempts sales tax, making it the responsibility of the client (WDFW), and further stipulates fees will increase up to 8% per year. The percentage increase language was not included in previous agreements. In total, the Department faces an 8% increase per year, with 9.4% sales tax included, raising costs from \$160,000 in fiscal year 2023 to \$173,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$187,000 in fiscal year 2025, respectively.

Novatus License Cost	
2019-21 BN	\$218,000
2021-23 BN	\$274,000
2023-25 BN	\$359,000
Increase	\$85,000

ESRI (GIS) Costs: \$402,000

Esri’s GIS mapping software is the primary mapping and spatial analytics technology used by WDFW for mapping, research, and data collection.

The current Esri Enterprise Agreement (EA), effective July 1, 2022, remains in effect for three years and grants WDFW uncapped access to the Esri products listed below. Maintenance on all listed software, including maintenance on listed software deployed prior to the EA, is included for the term of the EA.

The EA functions as a licensing mechanism for all units across WDFW; it provides access to a full suite of ArcGIS Platform components to assist WDFW in providing a comprehensive GIS framework, while enabling business units’ broader independence in managing their key information and workflows.

The Advantage Program will provide WDFW with the resources needed to support WDFW’s Azure cloud migration initiative with activities such as a system architecture review, cloud system architecture design, knowledge transfer, and training. The Advantage Program can also be leveraged for a variety of other activities such as the configuration of low-code/no-code web-based applications to showcase programs’ stories using their data and analytics, technical workflows including mobile/field inspections, migration to ArcGIS Pro, governance, and change

management.

Benefits of the ELA include, but are not limited to:

- A lower cost per unit for licensed software.
- Substantially reduced administrative and procurement expenses.
- Maintenance on all Esri software identified in this agreement and deployed within the organization.
- Complete flexibility to deploy software products when and where needed.

Previous ELA: \$240,000 per year.

Current ELA: \$373,350 per year (\$370,350 year 1 SiteScan prorated due to Sept. 1 start date).

Additional credits-based program (to help with the migration of GIS to Azure): \$67,650 per year.

Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Annual Maint. Fees	\$370,350	\$373,350	\$373,350	\$1,117,050
Advantage Program (AP)	\$67,650	\$67,650	\$67,650	\$202,950
Total EA Fee	\$438,000	\$441,000	\$441,000	\$1,320,000

Cost increases occurred (by percentage) in the following categories:

Server (106% increase):

1. No net gain to the enterprise system.
2. Addition of Network Analyst server to support Enforcement’s Spillman solution.
3. The largest increase: ArcGIS Monitor, a GIS server monitoring system.

Desktop (173% increase)

1. There was a general increase in the number of users of ArcGIS Desktop and its replacement, ArcGIS Pro, and associated extensions. Esri does not charge for concurrent use of these two products as organizations transition.

Web (3133% increase)

1. There has been a significant increase in the number of users creating web map services, spatial data services, and web applications.
2. Most significant was the increase in field application development and usage.
3. Added web usage increased the number of content credits required to host content.

The \$133,350 cost increase* for the ELA is broken down in the tables below.

Category	% Consumption Change	Cost Allocation %	Cost Change
Server	106%	3.1%	\$4,138
Desktop	173%	5.1%	\$6,776
Web	3,133%	91.8%	\$122,436
Total	3,412%	100.0%	\$133,350

Year	Amount
ELA 2019	\$240,000
ELA 2022	\$373,350
Change	\$133,350

*Note that the ELA cost increase does not include the \$67,650 AP as that is a separate item.

ESRI (GIS)	
Fiscal Year	Cost
2020	\$240,000
2021	\$240,000
2022	\$240,000
2023	\$438,000
2024	\$441,000
2025	\$441,000
2023-25 BN Increase	\$402,000

Tenable IO: \$160,000

Due to the continued need to protect a hybrid work environment, WDFW can no longer rely on the legacy perimeter defense posture provided by the state government network (SGN). Statistically, due to remote working conditions, approximately 80% of the agency endpoint fleet will continue to work outside of the SGN without robust security controls or traffic visibility. Nessus Pro, the Department's current vulnerability scanning solution, can only scan assets connected to the SGN; Tenable can scan any internet connected WDFW asset. The fee for the Tenable IO is \$80,000 per year.

Tenable IO	
2023-25 BN	\$160,000

Zscaler: \$1,022,000

Due to the continued need to protect a hybrid work environment, WDFW can no longer rely on the legacy perimeter defense posture provided by the state government network (SGN). Statistically, approximately 80% of the agency endpoint fleet will continue to work outside of the SGN without robust security controls or traffic visibility.

Zscaler is a Secure Access Service Edge (SASE), a cloud access security service which provide traffic visibility, deep packet inspection, access control, proxy services, and secure application access for on-premises or cloud-based software that sits between cloud service users and cloud applications, and monitors all activity, and enforces security policies.

In 2021, the state OCIO mandated all agency's use Microsoft O365 and DES purchased enterprise-wide licenses. Currently there are no Microsoft shared-tenant products available to cover all aspects of security (endpoints, servers, IoT, etc.) across home networks and other non-SGN connections. The fee for Zscaler is \$511,000 per year.

Zscaler	
2023-25 BN	\$1,022,000

Digital Asset Manager: \$52,000

WDFW's digital assets such as photos, videos, logos, templates, etc. are currently stored in a multitude of locations across the agency, from shared drives to laptop/desktop/portable hard drives, phones and tablets, and camera cards. Lack of a unified, easy-to-use storage solution makes it difficult to effectively leverage the agency's investment in purchased or self-created digital assets and puts the agency at risk when assets are used for unauthorized purposes.

A lack of connectivity between the agency's current image repository, ResourceSpace, and WDFW's Drupal website (wdfw.wa.gov) creates unnecessary work to use approved imagery on the website. Staff must find relevant image files in ResourceSpace, download the appropriate version, then upload to the Media Library in Drupal, making sure to manually copy metadata like alt text and image credits. In addition to being time consuming, this extra work can leave duplicate files on someone's desktop or hard drive that can quickly become out of date, and in some cases, failing to note usage restrictions may cause staff to share assets not approved for use in all circumstances, exposing the agency to risk.

Moving to a cloud-based, secure Digital Asset Management (DAM) system would give the agency a single, curated source of approved photos, videos, and graphics. These digital assets can be easily viewed and utilized by staff and shared with media and other partners outside the agency. Integrations between the DAM, Drupal, and Adobe Creative Cloud will reduce staff effort and time spent adding photos to the website and

simplify the process for creating graphics, print media, and other publications.

Digital Asset Manager	
2023-25 BN	\$52,000

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

N/A

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Below is a summary of biennial costs for all items:

- Hardware Leases: \$525,000
- Radio Cost Increase: \$21,000
- VPN Services: \$59,000
- DocuSign: \$48,000
- Novatus Contracts Software: \$85,000
- ESRI (GIS) Increases: \$402,000
- Tenable IO: \$160,000
- Zscaler: \$1,022,000
- Digital Asset Manager: \$52,000

Total = \$2,374,000 per biennium, \$1,176,000 in Fiscal Year 2024 and \$1,198,000 in Fiscal Year 2025.

Which costs are one-time; which are ongoing? What are impacts in future biennia?

All costs are ongoing.

Workforce Assumptions:

N/A

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This request provides important support to the Governor's Results Washington Goal, Efficient Effective and Accountable Government, by increasing the Department's technological functioning and ensuring a dependable network that will provide greater reliability to our customers who seek hunting or fishing information, hydraulic project approval status, and other core service information.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This request is essential in implementing WDFW's Strategy: Move WDFW Towards Operational and Environmental Excellence. Maintaining the Department's technology helps to build an effective and efficient organization by supporting the workforce, improving business, and investing in technology. This package works toward the objective of achieving operational excellence through effective business processes and investments in technology.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Business Management & Obligations –\$2,374,000 per biennium, ongoing (\$1,176,000 fiscal year 2024 and \$1,198,000 fiscal year 2025)
General Fund-State.

An effective agency requires administrative infrastructure that successfully supports the needs of staff who perform work directly in service to the mission. The Department's business management work comprehensively supports the entire agency and meets obligations by providing agency leadership and strategy, communicating with the public and legislature, managing finance and contracts, managing human resources, managing information technology infrastructure, building and maintaining office facilities, maintaining agency records, responding to public safety incidents (obligation to general policing by fully commissioned WDFW officers) and providing appeal processes.

Performance Outcomes:

WDFW will utilize funding to maintain essential technical tools that allow the Department to continue its fundamental day-to-day activities. All staff require Microsoft Office products, email exchange, network access, and data storage to perform the necessary functions of their positions. Ensuring all staff have the fundamental tools to create, retrieve, share, and store information is critical to accomplishing the agency's mission.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department maintain mission-critical technologies to ensure there is not degradation of services to the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying cost increases for these technologies that will have a negative impact on the Department's business operations and restrict mission critical work or advances/improvements throughout the Department.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Funding for maintenance level decision packages is frequently inwardly focused. This funding request is responding to cost increases for technologies that support core agency functions. Without additional funding for these increased/new costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not directly connected to specific communities, however cutting services and shifting resources will hinder the Department's ability to apply an equitable lens.

Target Populations or Communities:

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support specific communities such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted groups. The Department is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems to be sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities and many others are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23: Good Governance by increasing WDFW administrative infrastructure technological functioning and ensuring a dependable network that will provide greater reliability to the public seeking hunting or fishing information, hydraulic project approval status, and other core service information. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by ensuring continued administrative infrastructure to support WDFW mission and serve the public related to Puget Sound recovery efforts

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

DES leases WDFW PC and Technology hardware, email, telephone, and VPN services. DNR provides the radio network that acts as the primary communication method for WDFW Police.

Stakeholder Response:

N/A

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

Presidential Policy Direct 21 (PPD-21) identifies WDFW as Critical Infrastructure given the risk to the nation’s food supply based on the significant quantity of fish produced by the Department. These federal requirements for IT security and resiliency cannot be met without maintaining enough sustainable technology solutions as proposed in this decision package.

Reference Documents

[IT addendum - 9Q Equipment Maintenance and Software.docx](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

Yes

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. E	\$1,176	\$1,198	\$2,374	\$1,198	\$1,198	\$2,396

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

Each year, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) must clip and tag more than 100 million hatchery-produced Chinook and coho. The clipped adipose fin indicates the fish originated from a hatchery, and the tag identifies which hatchery. This process is most efficiently accomplished with automatic trailers with the AutoFish system. Of the eleven trailers WDFW owns, three are approaching their end of useful life. This request will fund the replacement purchase of one trailer per biennium thereby allowing WDFW to maintain current hatchery production levels. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$1,568	\$0	\$1,568	\$1,568	\$0	\$1,568
Total Expenditures	\$1,568	\$0	\$1,568	\$1,568	\$0	\$1,568

Decision Package Description

Per RCW 77.95.290, WDFW must clip the adipose fin of Chinook and coho, so they are recognizable as hatchery originated, and tag the fish (inserted in the snout) to identify which hatchery.

WDFW accomplishes the required marking by removing the adipose fin, which is the small fin on the lower back of the fish near the tail, of hatchery-raised salmonids. This fin removal process differentiates hatchery salmonids from wild populations as wild salmonids will have their adipose fin intact leading to the quick visual identification of hatchery salmonids by anglers and researchers alike (Figure 1).

At the time of adipose fin clipping, a coded wire tag (CWT) is also inserted into the snout of juvenile hatchery raised salmonids when they are a minimum size of 64mm, ideally 70-79mm (Figure 2). Coded wire tags allow the originating hatchery to be easily identified using unique coding based on when and where they were released. This process is accomplished most efficiently using one of the Department’s eleven automatic trailers equipped with the AutoFish System.

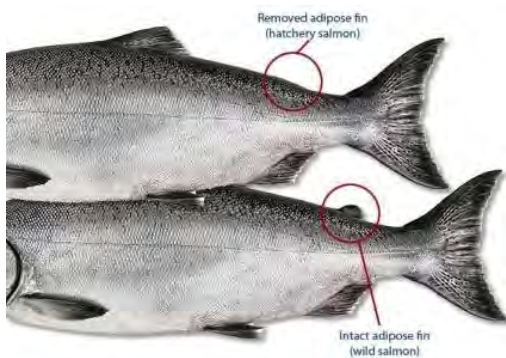


Figure 1. Hatchery salmonids with adipose fin removed compared to intact adipose fin of wild salmonids (WDFW)



Figure 2. Coded wire tag on fingertip (WDFW)

Three of the trailers are at, or approaching the end of their twenty-year useful life, replacement of these aging trailers is necessary to help WDFW maintain current hatchery production levels. The loss of a trailer will negatively impact the Department's ability to maintain current levels of marking and tagging, potentially leading to a decrease in hatchery production. This could also have a negative economic impact on local economies, impact federal court orders made with treaty tribes and reduce prey availability for Southern Resident Orca.

To prevent the potential decrease in hatchery production levels, and mitigate the resulting above-mentioned negative impacts, WDFW seeks to purchase one replacement trailer per biennium equipped with the AutoFish System. Trailers equipped with the AutoFish System are self-contained mobile processing centers that use computer-controlled technology to automatically clip and tag hatchery salmonids before their release (Figure 3). As these trailers can process between 40,000 and 70,000 fish in an eight-hour period (Figure 4). This system is more efficient than the alternative method of manually marking individual fish, and are also more humane due to reduced need for human handling and removal of anesthetic usage. The proposed replacement trailers could provide potential cost avoidance benefits for WDFW by removing the need for potentially expensive repairs oftentimes needed to maintain aging inventory.



Figure 3. Trailer containing AutoFish System Source: Northwest Marine Technology



Figure 4. Computer controlled AutoFish System inside trailer containing a sorter and six marking and tagging lines. Adipose fins are clipped via black mechanisms and then CWT inserted using blue injectors.

Source: Northwest Marine Technology

WDFW has explored alternative strategies over the years to maintain current levels of production, with the primary alternative being manually marking and tagging salmonids before release. Manually marking hatchery salmonids is not as desirable as automatically marking. To see the same number of fish processed by a trailer in an eight-hour period, it would require between 12-14 workers. Each worker processes roughly 6,000 fish in an eight-hour period and due to current labor market correct staffing levels have become more difficult to maintain. To provide the needed staff to match automatic processing WDFW has previously utilized state inmates under the supervision of the Department of Corrections, maintaining well-trained seasonal staff and temporary staffing agencies. Relying upon the ability to source correct staffing levels for manual marking is not sufficient to ensure the success of the mass marking program going forward.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

WDFW currently operates eleven automatic trailers equipped with AutoFish System. This proposal will allow for the replacement of one trailer, per biennia, ongoing.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Equipment cost, object J, totals \$1,568,000 per biennium, and includes \$1,433,480 for a replacement trailer, plus \$134,747 in sales tax at 9.4%.

Workforce Assumptions:

N/A

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve three Results Washington goals:

- Efficient Effective & Accountable Government
- Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment
- Prosperous Economy

This proposal is fundamental for the Department to efficiently mass mark all hatchery Chinook and coho salmon destined for harvest and required by state law (RCW 77.95.290). Furthermore, the mass-mark is essential to protect the marine ecosystems and support the survival of Southern Resident orcas and ESA-listed Chinook. Mass-marking is critical to managing recreational, commercial, and tribal fisheries while protecting native salmonid runs and other economically and culturally important species.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

The Department anticipates meeting informal measures through utilization of a safer, more efficient workforce equipped to carry out the Department's strategies to:

- Proactively address conservation challenges.
- Engage communities through recreation and stewardship.
- Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions.
- Model operational and environmental excellence.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Produce Hatchery Fish, \$1,568,000 per biennium ongoing, General Fund-State.

Hatchery mass-marking is critical to provide prey opportunities for endangered Southern Resident Orcas and recover endangered and threatened species to healthy, self-sustaining levels. Hatchery mass-marking benefits commercial and recreational fisheries and fulfills obligations to tribal fishing rights in salmon and steelhead. In addition, mass-marking is critical to enforce rules and regulations in fishing activities. Therefore, efficient mass-marking is critical for the Department's activities enforcing fishing regulations, monitoring, and managing fish populations to conserve and protect native fish and wildlife.

Performance Outcomes:

The funding for the purchase of one replacement automatic trailer equipped with the AutoFish System, will help WDFW reach the following performance measures:

- Mass marked hatchery produced Chinook salmon
- Mass marked hatchery produced coho salmon
- Fisheries in compliance with harvest protection goals
- Mark-selective fisheries Hatchery programs in compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA)
- Threatened and endangered species population increases

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

WDFW conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions and committed is to improving and evolving community engagement with communities historically excluded and marginalized. It is important that WDFW can maintain these functions to prevent a degradation of services to the communities we serve. This request will fund the purchase of one replacement automatic trailer per biennium thereby allowing WDFW to maintain current hatchery production levels.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Funding for maintenance level decision packages is frequently inwardly focused. This funding request is responding to a need to replace aging automatic trailers to maintain current hatchery productions levels. Without additional funding for these replacement costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not easily connected to specific communities, however cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equitable lens as WDFW will be forced to shift resources.

Target Populations or Communities:

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support target populations such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted communities. WDFW is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems so these resources are sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities, and many others, are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents. Washington's hatcheries support recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state and contribute significant revenue to local and rural businesses.

This package will: support local economies (tourism, lodging, restaurants, wholesalers and retailers of recreational equipment, boats, and licenses), provide family recreational opportunities, and protect Washington's fishing cultural heritage.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods by ensuring WDFW's continued hatchery production of salmon and other game fish across the state is efficient and supports a mark-selective fishery to inform adaptive management. Through these efforts, this decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID#205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity Work to reduce risk to wild populations by balancing the potential risks and benefits of hatchery production, and by conducting research on hatchery infrastructure and management to reduce the fitness differential between hatchery and wild populations. This decision package is also indirectly aligned with Action (ID#89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by ensuring that fish marking capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon hatchery that supports adaptive management of salmon recovery. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, by ensuring fish marking capacity for WDFW salmonid hatcheries is maintained to adaptively manage a mark-selected fishery. Through these efforts, this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower with salmon recovery.

State Workforce Impacts:

Replacement of equipment once the useful life has been met, satisfies OSHA, L&I, and union requirements for safe, reliable equipment that promotes safety and job performance proficiency and effectiveness.

Intergovernmental:

N/A

Stakeholder Response:

WDFW anticipates support from stakeholders, which include tribes, commercial fisheries, and the general public.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

In addition to RCW 77.95.290, the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531-1544) requires hatchery raised Chinook, coho and steelhead (salmonids) to be marked prior to their release into the environment allowing for quick visual differentiation from wild populations.

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. J	\$1,568	\$0	\$1,568	\$1,568	\$0	\$1,568

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Department of Fish and Wildlife
 2023-25 Regular Budget Session
 Maintenance Level - 9V - Capital Project Operating Costs

Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) enters into land leases or management agreements to further the Department’s mission to secure prime habitat that meets conservation values or provides increased recreational opportunities to the public. The Department received approval to purchase new lands through the capital budget, which means the Department’s obligation for operations and maintenance (O&M) on wildlife lands will increase in the 2023-2025 biennium. This proposal identifies the land acquisitions from the capital budget and requests ongoing funding to operate and maintain these lands.

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$211	\$211	\$422	\$211	\$211	\$422
Total Expenditures	\$211	\$211	\$422	\$211	\$211	\$422

Decision Package Description

Following the direction of RCW's 77.04.012, 77.12.039, 77.12.320 and 79a.15, in support of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW's) mission, Washington State purchases land, accepts land donations and enters into lease or management agreements to ensure fish and wildlife habitat and related recreational opportunities otherwise at risk. This land base is strategically developed based on the conservation needs of fish and wildlife and provides sustainable fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and other recreational opportunities when compatible with healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations and their habitats. WDFW currently owns and manages over one million acres of land in 33 wildlife areas throughout Washington State, collectively called "WDFW Lands". This includes over 450 boat launches that provide access to 220 lakes, 44 rivers and the Puget Sound. All land (to include newly acquired land or under WDFW leases or management agreements) has basic maintenance needs. As Washington state's population grows, so do the pressures on habitat, the importance of maintaining wildlife areas and water access areas, and the demand for outdoor recreation.

WDFW Lands are managed to provide conservation, hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching benefits for the public in accordance with the objectives of the acquisition or management agreement. This is different than the focus of other state, federal, and local public lands. Management involves critical stewardship, biological, restoration, real estate, public engagement, forestry, recreation, ecosystem, and weed control activities. The current budget for WDFW Lands stewardship is vastly insufficient to meet the stated management goals for both conservation and recreation of existing land, let alone, these newly acquired lands. This request addresses the increased management needs of newly increased acres through acquisition or management agreements or lease agreements. Actual management costs vary significantly depending on the land's use, management complexity, and ecological condition.

This budget request is for \$211,000 of operations and maintenance costs for 2,852.98 acres of land acquired or under new management agreement from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, based on tiered rates specific to the area and level of maintenance and stewardship needs.

Prior to the 2017-2019 biennium, WDFW acquired land or entered into lease or management agreements thereby increasing land base under WDFW's management. WDFW was not in practice to request increase to operation and maintenance funding. A 1991 analysis of capacity vs. need for the Department's water access areas indicated that funding levels at that point only supported 30% of the Department's goals, objectives, and deliverables to the public. Until the recent request for funding in the 2021-23 biennium, increase in funding specific to recreation infrastructure backlog, the budget amount for managing these areas has not increased – this means that for the last 30 years, the Department's ability to meet goals has continued to diminish below that 30% rate as we have increased the number of water access areas. In an assessment of WDFW's Wildlife Area lands, the true cost of average per acre stewardship cost (not including restoration or development enhancements) is \$52/acre, however the Department has less than half of that amount to work with. A study conducted by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee further substantiated the large gap in funding levels for the Department to fully execute the expected deliverables. This proposal identifies the land acquisitions from the capital budget and requests ongoing funding to operate and maintain these lands.

The Department is now in the practice to provide estimated operation and maintenance costs to the legislature and Office and Financial Management (OFM) upon funding requests for acquisition or capital improvement projects. If acquisition and capital improvement projects are enacted, the expectation is for the Department to request the operational funding needed once the property is acquired. This request supports the expectation that the Department will no longer create further disparaging funding gaps by not requesting operation funds. Rather, the Department attempts to rectify past practices and now request funding as needed.

The Department would do a disservice to the public by not requesting funding upon newly acquired or newly managed acres. The Department strives to produce excellence in meeting its mission and the needs of the recreating public and vital conservation values. By not requesting funding, WDFW lands would be unsafe for recreationists and threatened or endangered species risk being in jeopardy.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

N/A

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Table. Direct cost per fiscal year and wildlife area								
WDFW Region	County	Wildlife Area	Acquisition Date	Instrument	Fund Source of Purchase	Acres Acquired	Per Acre Rate	Direct Costs Per Fiscal Year
Region 1	Asotin	Chief Joseph	7/22/2021	Deed	Donation	7.26	\$52.00	\$378
Region 2	Douglas	Wells	4/13/2022	Deed	USFWS Sec 6	1,513.20	\$52.00	\$78,686
Region 2	Grant	Water Access	5/18/2022	Deed	WSPRC	174.00	\$52.00	\$9,048
Region 2	Grant	Columbia Basin	6/24/2022	Deed	FWC	129.00	\$52.00	\$6,708
Region 2	Okanogan	Scotch Creek	12/1/2021	Deed	RCO/WWRP	506.95	\$52.00	\$26,361
Region 3	Yakima	Oak Creek	12/13/2021	Deed	RCO/WWRP	289.84	\$52.00	\$15,072
Region 6	Grays Harbor	Scatter Creek	6/30/2022	Deed	RCO/WWRP & RCO/ASRP	94.00	\$52.00	\$4,888
Region 6	Pacific	Water Access	5/13/2022	Deed	RCO/WWRP	103.20	\$52.00	\$5,366
Region 6	Thurston	Scatter Creek	2/28/2022	Conservation Easement	RCO WWRP	34.19	\$52.00	\$1,778
Region 6	Pacific	Water Access	8/10/2021	Management Agreement	RCO BFP	1.34	N/A	\$7,000
Grand Total						2,852.98		\$155,285

Note:

Donation = Private local donated property to WDFW.

FWC = Fish and Wildlife Conservation Account to purchase WA State Dept. of Transportation property to WDFW.

RCO/ASRP = Recreation Conservation Office/Aquatic Species Restoration Plan state grant funds.

RCO/BFP = Recreation Conservation Office/Boating Facilities Program state grant funds.

RCO/WWRP = Recreation Conservation Office/Washington Wildlife Recreation Program state grant funds.

USFWS Sec 6 = United States Fish and Wildlife Service – Section 6 Endangered Species Act - Restoration Land Act.

WSPRC = WA State Parks and Recreation Commission to transfer land to WDFW.

Ongoing funding of this request provides for operations and maintenance for newly acquired lands as identified in the 2021-23 Biennium Capital Budget request for Mitigation Projects and Dedicated Funding. Legislatively approved funds acquired 2,851.64 acres of new land in fiscal year 2022 either under deed or conservation easement. A management agreement to lease 1.34 acres of a water access area from the county comes with high operation and maintenance costs.

Salaries and benefits (Objects A and B) for 1.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions total \$129,000, beginning in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing. Goods and services (object E) totals \$26,000, which includes both employee related goods and services such as WDFW standard costs, and general supplies for maintenance of fencing, weed control, facilities, roads, forests, habitats. Travel costs (object G) total \$4,000 for motor pool and other costs for staff to travel to new maintenance sites.

Funding is based proportional to lands purchased as prescribed in the table above. Goods and services (object E) are included per year, for as well as central agency costs. An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in O&M costs in object T calculated based on WDFW’s federally approved indirect rate.

In 2018, the stakeholder-based Budget and Policy Advisory Group developed a WDFW long-term funding plan, concluding that sources should be more expansive, more stable, and only supplemented by, not reliant on, license fees. Therefore, this decision package requests 100% General Fund-State.

Workforce Assumptions:

The approved capital request for the purchased land and new management agreement includes funding for increase of FTEs on new WDFW

owned or managed acres. The job classifications and associated work for 1.8 FTE are as follows:

1.6 FTE of Natural Resource Tech 2

0.2 FTE Maintenance Mechanic 1

These positions will conduct maintenance activities such as weed control, mowing, blowing, grading, cleaning public restrooms, repair and install signs, gates, fences, picking up litter and hauling or operating equipment to provide a safe and enjoyable public access area.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve two Results Washington goals: Goal 2: Prosperous Economy, and Goal 3: Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment.

WDFW manages more than one million acres of public-owned land, including over 500 water access areas. These lands provide essential habitat for fish and wildlife and offer fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and other conservation-based recreational opportunities for the public. In addition, acquired land is critical habitat for threatened or endangered species or for sustaining game populations, such as the winter range.

WDFW-managed lands offer access to the public for fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and a multitude of other recreational opportunities. Our management protects ecosystems services, including carbon sequestration, clean water, clean air, scenic beauty, and other benefits of conservation. The outdoor recreation industry and ecosystems services provide substantial monetary and non-monetary benefits to Washingtonians. A recent study by Earth Economics reported that WDFW Lands generate \$2.5 billion per year in direct and indirect economic impact.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This proposal aligns with the Department's Strategic Plan strategy to "Proactively Address Conservation Challenges." The Department ensures that land-use planning and decisions contribute to the conservation and recovery of fish and wildlife, and work with partners towards implementing and increasing net ecological gain. In addition, this proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following performance outcome:

- 10 percent net gain in the quality and quantity of our most important fish and wildlife habitat.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Acquire and Manage Lands 1.8 FTE and \$211,000 beginning fiscal year 2023 and ongoing, General Fund-State.

WDFW manages over one million acres of land throughout Washington. These lands provide habitat for fish and wildlife and recreational opportunities for the public, such as hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing. WDFW's land base is strategically developed based on the conservation needs of fish and wildlife. It provides sustainable fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and other recreational opportunities when compatible with healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations and their habitats.

To manage public lands effectively and responsibly, the Department maintains and improves ecological health. The WDFW strategically acquires new lands, builds and maintains safe, sanitary, and ecologically friendly water access areas, and ensures public safety through enforcement presence. These activities are accomplished through a variety of actions, including weed control, timber thinning (to help control wildfire and improve habitat quality), maintaining infrastructure (fences, signs, parking lots, trails, culverts, water control structures, wells, and irrigation systems), and removing garbage and litter. In addition, maintaining the staff and services addressed in this request will allow continuation of:

- Current level of sanitation and litter removal
- Wildlife area plans developed through cross-programmatic, local community, and stakeholder collaboration (two to four plans per year on average)
- Clear stewardship and recreation priorities for wildlife area management to direct on-the-ground priorities
- Capacity to maintain and repair boundary fences and fences associated with other management needs
- Hundreds of weed treatments per year protecting ecological integrity on thousands of acres and preventing weeds from spreading to adjacent landowners

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Indicators:

- Acres of protected fish and wildlife habitat
- Road miles improved
- Percent change in hunter or fisher opportunities

Land stewardship will result in the efficient use of state resources to conserve and restore Washington's fish and wildlife species and their habitats, while providing low-cost and safe access to hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching opportunities. WDFW manages land to balance hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing with ecosystem preservation. Land management will successfully preserve or enhance its habitat value, minimize the spread of invasive species, and support the conservation of biodiversity and the recovery of threatened and endangered species. WDFW will be able to conduct our current level of legal and fiduciary responsibilities towards these new acquired lands.

Equity Impacts**Community outreach and engagement:**

The Department completes community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain these functions to ensure there is not degradation of services to the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying inflationary cost increases that will have a negative impact on the Department's business operations and restrict the mission critical work, or advances/improvements throughout the Department.

This package specifically supports the Department's responsibility to steward owned or managed lands for public benefit statewide. Access to public lands provides low-cost outdoor recreational opportunities to Washington communities. According to the Washington State Department of Health, increasing access to natural areas like parks or wildlife areas generally decreases a community's risk of chronic diseases. By securing funding to manage these lands, the Department ensures Washingtonians in these areas have access to quality outdoor experiences and a connection to nature.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

This funding request is responding to a new cost increase in land stewardship, operational and management costs associated to newly acquired and leased lands that allow for public recreation throughout the state. Without additional funding for these new costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not easily connected to specific communities, however cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equitable lens as the Department is forced to shift resources.

Target Populations or Communities:

WDFW lands are located throughout the state and both urban and rural communities make up the neighboring landowners. Having lands located all over Washington State helps diverse geographic communities when the Department shares the cost of these assessments and not creating an undue burden upon the local populace taxpayers.

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support target populations, such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted communities. The Department is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems to be sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities and many others are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

N/A

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

This proposal is important for collaborations with city, county, and regional governments. Without this funding and the work that it will allow, WDFW will have less ability to collaborate on wildlife area planning with local governments; to ensure and enforce public safety; to work on land exchanges and sell, buy, donate, or accept lands from governmental partners; to develop and ensure accurate payments for PILT and county assessments, to benefit weed control districts and other local governments by avoiding weed infestations that may also spread to adjacent lands; and to share information with our federal, state, and local government partners. Additionally, the reduced quality of both habitat and recreational experiences would impact clean air, water, and local economic activity provided by WDFW Lands. For the forest work, our ability to deliver on the WDFW portion of the statewide 20-year strategy for forest health will be less certain. Our ability to participate in Coordinated Resource Management efforts for working lands and weed management will also be reduced.

Stakeholder Response:

Conservation organizations and recreation organizations would benefit from improvements to habitat conditions, public safety, and public engagement opportunities. Farm and livestock owners, recreation businesses that rely on commercial permits on WDFW lands, recreation groups that want to participate in WDFW wildlife area planning (this includes the Department's diverse advisory committees), stakeholders who care about WDFW's land management and acquisition process; which include land trusts, Cattlemen's Association, Farm Bureau, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Mule Deer Foundation, Pheasants Forever, Audubon Society, Conservation Northwest, The Nature Conservancy, the timber industry, recreation groups like the Washington Trails Association, Back Country Horsemen of Washington, and the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, would all benefit from this proposal.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

Many of WDFW Lands property deed's include legal and fiduciary responsibilities to manage these lands in perpetuity for the purposes of conservation and public access. These cuts collectively diminish our ability to maintain these obligations and to preserve the real property assets owned on behalf of the people of Washington State.

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$85	\$85	\$170	\$85	\$85	\$170
Obj. B	\$44	\$44	\$88	\$44	\$44	\$88
Obj. E	\$26	\$26	\$52	\$26	\$26	\$52
Obj. G	\$4	\$4	\$8	\$4	\$4	\$8
Obj. T	\$52	\$52	\$104	\$52	\$52	\$104

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Department of Fish and Wildlife
2023-25 Regular Budget Session
Maintenance Level - CA - County and Other Assessments

Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) owns over one million acres of land throughout Washington State. These lands are subject to general assessments, which include county and non-county; water service agreements and various assessments such as weed, irrigation, lake management district, dike, and fire protection assessments. Additionally, the Department leases land from private, local, federal, and state entities for conservation and migration of certain species. These assessments have risen, and this package seeks funding for the increased costs to maintain land continuity for the public to recreate, hunt, fish, and view wildlife. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$213	\$213	\$426	\$213	\$213	\$426
Total Expenditures	\$213	\$213	\$426	\$213	\$213	\$426

Decision Package Description

Following the direction of RCW's 77.04.012, 77.12.039, 77.12.320 and 79a.15, in support of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW's) mission, Washington State has received approval to lease or purchase lands and accept land donations to secure fish and wildlife habitat and related recreational opportunities otherwise at risk. This strategically developed land base addresses fish and wildlife conservation needs and provides sustainable fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and other recreational opportunities when compatible with healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations and their habitats.

WDFW is legally required to pay assessments for owned or managed land. The Department pays assessments annually to counties, irrigation, and lake management districts, weed control boards, conservation districts, fire districts, home-owners associations, and the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The service level is not increasing, rather the cost of the services is increasing. The total budget request is \$213,000 each fiscal year:

County Assessments - \$98,000

- County assessment rates increased costs in fiscal year 2022 and continues into consecutive fiscal years.
- Fire protection assessments from local fire districts increased costs in fiscal year 2022 and continues into consecutive fiscal years.

Non-County Assessments - \$40,000

- Irrigation District assessment rates increased costs in fiscal year 2022 and continues into consecutive fiscal years.
- DNR fire protection assessments rates increased costs in fiscal year 2022 and continues into consecutive fiscal years.

Lease Agreements - \$75,000

- DNR lease rates and assessments increased in fiscal year 2022 and 2023 and continues into consecutive fiscal years.

WDFW stewards over one million acres of land, portions of which include lease or management agreements with many partners and require associated assessment payments. The Department pays assessments on acquired and managed lands annually, with costs often increasing each year. To avoid an operating budget gap produced by these rising costs, the Department monitors the budgets and submits funding requests to ensure funding levels are supported to pay the assessments due. WDFW is legally required to pay assessments for land that it owns or manages. The Department established an annual process to review changes to the assessment levels and to request operation and maintenance funding to coincide with these increased assessment costs. Funding this package allows WDFW to pay for county and non-county assessments, as required by law, without significantly decreasing Department activities.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This proposal addresses rate increases and is not an expansion or alteration of current program. The total cost for county and non-county assessments and lease rates increased in the 2021-23 biennium and the Department projects that this higher level of cost will continue into the 2023-25 biennium.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Goods and services (object E) totals \$159,000 per year, beginning in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing support is necessary for increased county assessments, fire protection assessments and DNR lease agreements and assessments. An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.5% is included (object T) and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Various local governments and DNR submit invoices to the Department for services provided. Actual payments for fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023 to the irrigation and lake management districts, weed control boards, fire districts and DNR have increased. The local fire districts and DNR provide fire-suppression readiness services for WDFW owned and managed lands when a particular parcel of WDFW land is located outside of otherwise mandated coverage areas. The cost is determined by applying a base rate to the number of acres covered by this service and varies by jurisdiction.

Workforce Assumptions:

N/A

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This request provides important support to the Governor's Results Washington Goal: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment by ensuring habitat protection and outdoor recreational opportunities. WDFW lands are composed of both working and natural lands, and it is necessary to have the correct funding level to make payments to the affected districts and counties for these lands.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

The Department has the goal of conserving and protecting native fish and wildlife and providing sustainable fishing, hunting, and other wildlife-related recreational and commercial experiences. This request is essential in implementing WDFW's Strategy: Proactively address conservation challenges by using the budget for managing WDFW lands, rather than diverting existing operating funds to cover this increased cost in legal obligations, which would reduce our service delivery on conservation and recreation.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Acquire and Manage Lands, \$213,000 General Fund-State

WDFW's strategically developed land base serves the conservation needs of fish and wildlife, and provides sustainable fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing and other recreational opportunities when compatible with healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations and their habitats. To effectively and responsibly own and manage public lands, the Department maintains and improves the ecological health of its lands, strategically acquires new lands, or sells lands that no longer serve the mission, builds and maintains safe, sanitary and ecologically friendly water access sites and ensures public safety through enforcement presence.

Land management results in the conservation and restoration of diversity of Washington's fish and wildlife species and their habitats, while providing affordable access to hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching opportunities. Department land and sites will continue to be managed appropriately to balance hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing with ecosystem preservation. Land management will successfully preserve or enhance its habitat value, minimize the spread of invasive species, and support the conservation of biodiversity and the recovery of threatened and endangered species.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following performance outcomes:

- Acres of protected fish and wildlife habitat
- Percentage of assets maintained to an adequate operational standard

WDFW owns and manages over one million acres of land, including hundreds of water access sites. These lands provide essential habitat for fish and wildlife and provide fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and other conservation-based recreation opportunities for the public. Acquired land is often for either critical habitat for threatened or endangered species, or critical habitat for sustaining game populations, such as winter range. The opportunities these lands afford the public are an important contribution to the state's economy, especially in rural areas of the state. In total, outdoor recreation contributes over \$20 billion to the state economy every year.

Funding this package allows WDFW to pay for county and non-county assessments, as required by law, without significantly decreasing the level of Department activities, such as land management and enforcement, or other areas of the Department such as selective fisheries, hatchery production, fish and wildlife management and research, salmon recovery, and HPA permitting activities. WDFW will maintain its lands, continuing its management programs that benefit fish and wildlife and provide public recreation such as hunting, fishing, bird watching, wildlife photography, hiking, and equestrian pursuits.

Equity Impacts**Community outreach and engagement:**

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain these functions to ensure there is not degradation services to the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying inflationary cost increases that will have a negative impact on the Departments business operations and restrict the mission critical work, or advances/improvements throughout the Department.

This package specifically supports the Department's responsibility to steward owned or managed lands for public benefit statewide. Access to public lands provides low-cost outdoor recreational opportunities to Washington communities. According to the Washington State Department of Health, increasing access to natural areas like parks or wildlife areas generally decreases a community's risk of chronic diseases. By securing funding to manage these lands, we will ensure Washingtonians in these areas have access to quality outdoor experiences and a connection to nature.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

This funding request is responding to a new cost increase in county and non-county assessments and leases on lands that allow for public recreation throughout the state. Without additional funding for these increased/new costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not easily connected to specific communities, however cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equitable lens as the Department is forced to shift resources.

Target Populations or Communities:

WDFW lands are located throughout the state and both urban and rural communities make up the neighboring landowners. Payments made by the Department to county and local entities support local services to the public. WDFW lands are located across the state and contribute to diverse geographic communities, these increasing assessments address local and statewide issues, it is crucial the Department contributes as required to prevent an undue burden on the local populace taxpayers.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22: outdoor recreation and stewardship by ensuring that land acquisition programs continue while benefiting fish and wildlife and providing public recreation such as hunting, fishing, bird watching, wildlife photography, hiking, and equestrian pursuits. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery by ensuring that land acquisition programs continue to support critical habitat for salmon recovery and ensure operations of hatcheries. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by ensuring continued WDFW program capacity to acquire land to support wildlife, conservation, and public recreation needs. Through these efforts, this package also indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 1 Significantly increase investment in restoration and acquisition of habitat in areas where Chinook stocks most benefit Southern Resident orcas and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 1 Protect and restore vital salmon habitat.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

WDFW’s assessment payments to districts and counties are an important component in their financial management and balancing of their budgets. These funds provide financial support to counties for services received.

Stakeholder Response:

Conservation organizations and recreation organizations would benefit from improvements to habitat conditions, public safety, and public engagement opportunities. Farm and livestock owners, recreation businesses that rely on commercial permits on WDFW lands, recreation groups that want to participate in WDFW wildlife area planning (this includes the Department’s diverse advisory committees), stakeholders who care about WDFW’s land management and acquisition process; which include land trusts, Cattlemen’s Association, Farm Bureau, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Mule Deer Foundation, Pheasants Forever, Audubon Society, Conservation Northwest, The Nature Conservancy, the timber industry, recreation groups like the Washington Trails Association, Back Country Horsemen of Washington, and the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, would all be benefit from this proposal.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. E	\$159	\$159	\$318	\$159	\$159	\$318
Obj. T	\$54	\$54	\$108	\$54	\$54	\$108

Agency Contact Information

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Department of Fish and Wildlife
2023-25 Regular Budget Session
Maintenance Level - EW - Ongoing Essential Work

Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) received one-time funding for priority work in the 2021-23 Biennial and 2022 Supplemental Budgets. This decision package requests these efforts to be funded ongoing, and at the originally requested levels to maintain efforts that benefit all Washingtonians through continued work and retained expertise for these subjects. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	37.9	37.9	37.9	37.9	37.9	37.9
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$6,486	\$6,350	\$12,836	\$6,350	\$6,350	\$12,700
Total Expenditures	\$6,486	\$6,350	\$12,836	\$6,350	\$6,350	\$12,700

Decision Package Description

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has identified current priority work for the agency to maintain that was funded one-time in prior budgets. Without sustained funding, reductions to these efforts will directly impact the core mission of preserving, protecting, and perpetuating the state’s fish, wildlife, and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities. Preserving these activities is about more than being able to access an individual activity, it’s about sustaining nature and the outdoor activities to keep people and the economy healthy. Natural resource investments have a triple bottom line return – healthier ecosystems, healthier people, and healthier economies with living-wage jobs.

Below is a breakdown of current funding information for at-risk work, including system provided line items in WDFW’s budget and the system provided summary. Agency request to maintain this work is supplied in the requested funding columns. Funding requested has not been updated or changed from originally requested amounts for those fiscal years. Items without WDFW submitted requests are requested at fiscal year 2023 levels.

Current Funding Information			Requested Funding				TOTAL REQUEST	Current Funding Information
Funded in Session:	VABS Line Item Title	Title	FY 24	FY 25	FTE 2024	FTE 2025	Biennial Request Dollars in Thousands	System Provided Summary for Current Funding (VABS Reports)
19-21 BN & 21-23 BN	WFRC	Wolf Recovery	477	477	1.5	1.5	954	One-time funding is provided to manage wolf conflicts with livestock by working with ranchers on non-lethal methods to deter wolves from preying on cattle.
21-23 BN	WLFA	Wolf Advisory Group	130	130	-	-	260	One-time funding is provided for an external facilitator to seek solutions through a collaborative process using the Wolf Advisory Group.
21-23 BN	A9	Streamflow Policy Support	519	519	3.0	3.0	1,038	One-time funding is provided for WDFW to continue to provide policy and scientific support to the Department of Ecology regarding surface and groundwater resource management issues, with a focus on fish and wildlife and adequate instream flows. This work expands on recent implementation of Chapter 1, Laws of 2018 (ESSB 6091) from the 2018 legislative session (Chapter 90.94 RCW).
21-23 BN	C4	Columbia River Pinniped Predation	753	753	4.2	4.2	1,506	One-time funding is provided for WDFW to reduce pinniped predation by increasing lethal removal of sea lions in the Columbia River.
21-23 BN	A4A	Salish Sea Marine Mammal Surveys	470	470	2.0	2.0	940	One-time funding is provided to expand efforts to survey the diets of seals and sea lions and identify non-lethal management actions to deter them from preying on salmon and steelhead.
21-23 BN	FISH	Increase Fish Populations (Hatchery Maintenance)	500	500	4.0	4.0	1,000	Ongoing funding is provided for hatchery production for orca prey for the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission to grant to tribes, for the Yakama Nation, and for Public Utility Districts. One-time funding is provided for WDFW hatchery maintenance. [This is requesting the one-time portion only.]
21-23 BN & 2022 SUPP	A5A & A5A0	Salmon and Steelhead Monitoring	822	822	6.7	6.7	1,644	One-time authority is provided for WDFW to improve Puget Sound steelhead spawning estimates, which inform recreational fishery management decisions.
21-23 BN & 2022 SUPP	A5C	Crab Fishery and Humpbacks	285	285	2.5	2.5	570	WDFW is provided one-time funding to study the effectiveness of electronically tracking crab fishery gear to avoid whale entanglements during their migration.
21-23 BN & 2022 SUPP	S4B & S4B1	Toutle & Skamania Hatcheries	948	948	5.7	5.7	1,896	One-time funding is provided to replace a reduction in support from the federal government through the Mitchell Act for the Toutle and Skamania hatcheries.
2022 SUPP	FP	Fish Passage Rulemaking	225	225	1.0	1.0	450	One-time funding is provided to complete rulemaking for fishways, flow, and screening to protect fish passage when rivers and streams are diverted or obstructed for human uses.
2022 SUPP	S11	Prioritization of Fish Barriers	360	224	1.3	1.3	584	One-time funding is provided for developing a statewide prioritization of fish passage barriers in consultation with regional salmon recovery organizations to maximize salmon recovery efforts and coordinate with the state's schedule for culvert corrections.
2022 SUPP	SRIP	Riparian Systems Assessment	997	997	6.0	6.0	1,994	One-time funding is provided to assess the status of current riparian ecosystems, including gaps in vegetated cover, water temperature impairments, fish passage barriers, and salmon stocks.
Total:			6,486	6,350	37.9	37.9	12,836	

Funding for these items came through multiple avenues including agency requests, fiscal notes, and provisos without agency requests. Items labeled GOV Budget Informal Request were requests directed by the Office of Financial Management (OFM) in support of the Governor’s priorities. The supporting requests, if WDFW requested these funds, are attached with below crosswalk between line items and supplemental information.

Funded In Session:	VABS Line Item	Title	Origin	Differences from Request	Supporting Document Attachment Name:
19-21 BN	WFRC	Wolf Recovery	Fiscal Note: 2097 E S HB	Funded one-time in 2019-21 and 2021-23	BNES HB 2097
21-23 BN	WLFA	Wolf Advisory Group	Proviso without Agency Submittal	Facilitation for controversial topic is ongoing	N/A
21-23 BN	A9	Streamflow Policy Support	GOV Budget Informal Request	Partially funded one-time	Future Flows for Fish
21-23 BN	C4	Columbia River Pinniped Predation	Agency Submitted Decision Package	Partially funded one-time	A4 - Marine Mammal Management
21-23 BN	A4A	Salish Sea Marine Mammal Surveys	Agency Submitted Decision Package	Partially funded one-time	A4 - Marine Mammal Management
21-23 BN	FISH	Increase Fish Populations (Hatchery Maintenance)	Proviso without Agency Submittal	Maintenance is ongoing priority work	N/A
& 2022 SUPP	A5A & A5A0	Salmon and Steelhead Monitoring	Agency Submitted Decision Package	Split funded one-time, remainder of request funded ongoing	A5 - Coastal and Freshwater Monitoring
& 2022 SUPP	A5C	Crab Fishery and Humpbacks	Agency Submitted Decision Package	Split funded one-time, remainder of request funded ongoing	A5 - Coastal and Freshwater Monitoring
& 2022 SUPP	S4B & S4B1	Toutle & Skamania Hatcheries	Agency Submitted Decision Package	Partially funded one-time	S4 - Hatchery Grants Shortfall
2022 SUPP	FP	Fish Passage Rulemaking	Agency Submitted Decision Package	Funded one-time	FP - Fish Passage Rulemaking
2022 SUPP	S11	Prioritization of Fish Barriers	GOV Budget Informal Request	Funded one-time	11 - Prioritization Plan for Fish Passage Barriers
2022 SUPP	SRIP	Riparian Systems Assessment	GOV Budget Informal Request	Partially funded one-time	Riparian Atlas & High Resolution Change Detection

Summary of impacts due to lack of ongoing funding:

Wolf Recovery: Increased response time and an increase in wolf-livestock conflicts and reduction in the ability for WDFW to provide funding for non-lethal deterrents for wolves.

Wolf Advisory Group: Lack of facilitation efforts around a contentious issue can cause damage to public trust, lack of social support for wolf recovery, and further increased risk of litigation.

Streamflow Policy Support: The investments made by the State in terms of salmon recovery, orca recovery, and the amelioration of climate change impacts may be undermined if WDFW is unable to effectively participate in the water resource management discussions occurring around the state (e.g., assessing mitigation adequacy, climate change impacts, drought response and preparedness, water banking, trust water rights, instream flow rulemaking, future water right adjudications).

Columbia River Pinniped Predation: Continued high level of predation of salmon by sea lions in the Columbia River, significantly impacting endangered and threatened stocks of salmon and steelhead. Sea lions also prey on mature sturgeon below Bonneville Dam, and on listed salmon and steelhead runs in the Willamette River and other tributaries to the Columbia River. Ceasing to fund would undermine Governor Inslee’s Southern Resident Task Force Recommendation #13.

Salish Sea Marine Mammal Surveys: Reduced information related to pinniped numbers, including foraging areas, diet composition, consumption rates, and overall impact to ESA-listed salmon stocks in Puget Sound, the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the outer coast. The work also helps identify important estuaries/rivers where nonlethal deterrents can be used to protect both spawning adult fish and out-migrating smolts from pinniped predation. Ceasing to fund would undermine Governor Inslee’s Southern Resident Task Force Recommendation #12.

Increase Fish Populations (Hatchery Maintenance): Reduced dedicated funding for maintaining hatcheries, increasing backlog, and increasing likelihood of larger requests when deferred maintenance snowballs to failures such as 2019 generator failure resulting in loss of 4.1 million Chinook salmon fry.

Salmon and Steelhead Monitoring: Reduced surveys to understand when, where, and how many Endangered Species Act listed species anglers encounter in Puget Sound river fisheries.

Crab Fishery and Humpbacks: Increased chance humpback whales become entangled in crab fishery equipment. Increased risk of litigation and economically valuable costal crab fishery closure due to lack of compliance with Endangered Species Act (ESA) and not having an incidental take permit to promulgate the fishery.

In order to be compliant with the ESA, WDFW must secure an ESA Section 10 incidental take permit (ITP) from NOAA. A conservation plan (CP) for the coastal Dungeness crab fishery is required to initiate the ITP process; the CP describes the risks that the crab fishery poses to ESA species and the management tools (e.g., time and area closures, effort reduction, etc.) that will be implemented to reduce those risks. A key component of the CP is a robust monitoring program, which is necessary to ensure the fishery effectively operates within the terms of the ITP

and that permanent, and adaptive management tools are effective now, and in the future.

Toutle & Skamania Hatcheries: Decreased salmon and steelhead production by 1.5 million fish and cause the closure of the Toutle and Skamania hatcheries. Lost production would impact recreational and commercial fisheries from Alaska to Canada, down the Washington coast, and in the Columbia River. It could also impair Washington's ability to fulfill commitments of the Pacific Salmon Treaty with Canada. Additionally, Toutle Fall Chinook are in the top three prey stocks for the Southern Resident Killer Whales.

Fish Passage Rulemaking: Removal of dedicated staff time for the management of rulemaking, performed by the fish passage policy and rules coordinator. They are responsible for guiding the rulemaking process through the major phases, executing supplemental contracts for APA required documents, tracking, and documenting internal and external feedback, and managing the postadoption implementation plan.

Prioritization of Fish Barriers: Removal of staff will cause loss of opportunistic investments in removing barrier culverts which will become significantly underleveraged and fall short of its tremendous potential as an investment in salmon restoration and risk new federal investments not being prioritized to where they could benefit most.

Riparian Systems Assessment: Loss of funding for ongoing riparian condition assessments will compromise the our ability to: 1) target protection and restoration efforts to streams that provide the greatest conservation value and thus offer most efficient approach to recovering salmon and other native species, and 2) demonstrate cumulative improvements of statewide riparian condition and extent over time - consistent with the intent of many statewide programs e.g., Voluntary Stewardship Program, the Forest and Fish Agreement, and WDFW's Priority Habitats and Species. Finally, the loss of funding would hinder jurisdictions from understanding how to accommodate new development and to anticipate effects of climate change in ways that minimize unintended negative consequences.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This is the maintenance of current efforts funded by the Legislature and Governor in the 2021-23 Biennial Budget and 2022 Supplemental Budget. For one item, Wolf Recovery – WFRC, this is also maintaining the exact same level of effort from 2019-21 biennium, as the Legislature funded this line item twice on a one-time basis.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

This request is for maintaining work at the originally requested amounts, cost estimates are not updated and detailed assumption and calculations from attachments provide further detail.

Salaries and benefits are requested at historic cost of that job class at step L in the session that they were requested. Infrastructure and administrative program support rate is provided in Object T at the federally negotiated rate at the point of submittal.

Wolf Recovery:

Salaries and benefits (Objects A and B) total \$145,000 per fiscal year ongoing for FTE information provided in workforce assumptions. Object E, goods and services, also includes \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.

Object C, contracted services, includes \$216,000 per fiscal year for non-lethal deterrent support.

An infrastructure and administrative program support rate for \$107,000 is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally-approved indirect rate at time of submittal.

Total for this line of effort to continue is \$477,000 per fiscal year ongoing. Further information can be found in attached fiscal note.

Wolf Advisory Group:

Object C, contracted services, includes \$99,000 per fiscal year for an external facilitator to seek solutions through a collaborative process using the Wolf Advisory Group.

An infrastructure and administrative program support rate for \$31,000 is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally-approved indirect rate at time of submittal.

Total for this line of effort to continue is \$130,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

Streamflow Policy Support:

Salaries and benefits (Objects A and B) total \$376,000 per fiscal year ongoing for FTE information provided in workforce assumptions. Object E, goods and services, also includes \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.

An infrastructure and administrative program support rate for \$125,000 is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally-approved indirect rate at time of submittal.

Total for this line of effort to continue is \$519,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

Columbia River Pinniped Predation:

Salaries and benefits (Objects A and B) total \$427,000 per fiscal year ongoing for FTE information provided in workforce assumptions. Object E, goods and services, also includes \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.

Object E, goods and services, includes \$5,000 per fiscal year for necessary safety equipment, \$24,000 per fiscal year for boat fuel and maintenance, \$12,000 per fiscal year for aerial surveys, \$35,000 per fiscal year for in-water pinniped surveys, and \$9,000 per fiscal year in rendering plant disposal costs. All items are ongoing.

Object G, travel, includes \$34,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

An infrastructure and administrative program support rate for \$182,000 is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally-approved indirect rate at time of submittal.

Total for this line of effort to continue is \$753,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

Salish Sea Marine Mammal Surveys:

Salaries and benefits (Objects A and B) total \$182,000 per fiscal year ongoing for FTE information provided in workforce assumptions. Object E, goods and services, also includes \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.

Object E, goods and services, includes \$20,000 per fiscal year for testing of new non-lethal deterrent equipment, \$5,000 per fiscal year for estuary and river focused survey work, \$16,000 per fiscal year for aerial surveys, \$97,000 per fiscal year for dietary analysis contracts, \$2,000 per fiscal year for safety equipment, and \$12,000 per fiscal year for boat fuel and maintenance. All items are ongoing.

Object G, travel, includes \$10,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

An infrastructure and administrative program support rate for \$114,000 is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally-approved indirect rate at time of submittal.

Total for this line of effort to continue is \$470,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

Increase Fish Populations (Hatchery Maintenance):

Salaries and benefits (Objects A and B) total \$330,000 per fiscal year ongoing for FTE information provided in workforce assumptions. Object E, goods and services, also includes \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.

Object E, goods and services, includes \$25,000 per fiscal year in equipment and parts for hatchery maintenance.

An infrastructure and administrative program support rate for \$121,000 is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally-approved indirect rate at time of submittal.

Total for this line of effort to continue is \$500,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

Salmon and Steelhead Monitoring:

Salaries and benefits (Objects A and B) total \$544,000 per fiscal year ongoing for FTE information provided in workforce assumptions. Object E, goods and services, also includes \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.

Object E, goods and services, includes \$4,000 per fiscal year for nets, dry suits, and safety supplies related to collection of steelhead abundance data.

Object G, travel, includes \$32,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

An infrastructure and administrative program support rate for \$198,000 is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally-approved indirect rate at time of submittal.

Total for this line of effort to continue is \$822,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

Crab Fishery and Humpbacks:

Salaries and benefits (Objects A and B) total \$186,000 per fiscal year ongoing for FTE information provided in workforce assumptions. Object E, goods and services, also includes \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.

Object G, travel, includes \$15,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

An infrastructure and administrative program support rate for \$69,000 is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally-approved indirect rate at time of submittal.

Total for this line of effort to continue is \$285,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

Toutle & Skamania Hatcheries:

Salaries and benefits (Objects A and B) total \$462,000 per fiscal year ongoing for FTE information provided in workforce assumptions. Object E, goods and services, also includes \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.

Object E, goods and services, includes \$166,000 per fiscal year ongoing for the mass marking and tagging of hatchery produced fish, as well as supplies, utilities, fish food, communications, vehicle mileage and maintenance, training, and personnel services for the hatchery staff.

Object G, travel, includes \$5,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

Object J, equipment, includes \$2,000 per fiscal year ongoing for hatchery related equipment.

An infrastructure and administrative program support rate for \$199,000 is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally-approved indirect rate at time of submittal.

Total for this line of effort to continue is \$948,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

Fish Passage Rulemaking:

Salaries and benefits (Objects A and B) total \$117,000 per fiscal year ongoing for FTE information provided in workforce assumptions. Object E, goods and services, also includes \$7,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.

Object E, goods and services, includes \$4,000 per year ongoing for Assistant Attorney General time for rulemaking.

Object C, contracted services, includes \$35,000 per year and ongoing for facilitator and strategic services.

Object G, travel, includes \$2,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

An infrastructure and administrative program support rate for \$60,000 is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally-approved indirect rate at time of submittal.

Total for this line of effort to continue is \$225,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

Prioritization of Fish Barriers:

Salaries and benefits (Objects A and B) total \$155,000 per fiscal year ongoing for FTE information provided in workforce assumptions. Object E, goods and services, also includes \$7,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.

Object C, contracted services, includes \$100,000 for fiscal year 2024 for facilitation of potentially contentious discussions with stakeholders on the development of the statewide fish passage strategy. Further facilitation years were not requested.

An infrastructure and administrative program support rate for \$96,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$60,000 ongoing is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally-approved indirect rate at time of submittal.

Total for this line of effort to continue is \$360,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$224,000 in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing.

Riparian Systems Assessment:

Salaries and benefits (Objects A and B) total \$690,000 per fiscal year ongoing for FTE information provided in workforce assumptions. Object E, goods and services, also includes \$7,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.

An infrastructure and administrative program support rate for \$265,000 is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally-approved indirect rate at time of submittal.

Total for this line of effort to continue is \$997,000 per fiscal year, ongoing.

Workforce Assumptions:

Additional information can be found in relevant attachments. Salaries and benefits are based off original requests and do not reflect cost of living adjustments or targeted increases. However, FTEs are adjusted if not provided when WDFW did not submit requests or funding did not match request to reflect FTEs currently funded.

Wolf Recovery:

1.5 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 3 to work as Conflict Specialists in Ferry and Stevens counties.

Streamflow Policy Support:

1.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Research Scientist 2 for science consultation.

1.0 FTE Environmental Planner 4 for coordination and participation in the rule-making process.

1.0 FTE Environmental Planner 5 for policy consultation and oversight.

Columbia River Pinniped Predation:

1.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Research Scientist 1 to serve as Lead Marine Mammal Ecologist for the Marine Mammal Investigations Unit. The Research Scientist has responsibilities throughout western Washington conducting research, monitoring, and assessments of whales, porpoises, seals, sea lions, and sea otters. This position will oversee pinniped survey design and data analysis for the Salish Sea, Washington outer coast, and the Columbia River.

1.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Biologist 4 for implementation, management, developing of agreements with partners, and procuring federal permits, and supervising Biologist 2s for Columbia River and Salish Sea.

2.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Biologist 2 for conducting all work associated with pinniped management and monitoring on the Columbia River.

0.2 FTE Fish & Wildlife Health Specialist for required oversight of euthanasia, animal care, and animal handling.

Salish Sea Marine Mammal Surveys:

2.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Biologist 2 conduct all work associated with pinniped surveys and diet sampling, processing, analysis, and estimations for the Salish Seas.

Increase Fish Populations (Hatchery Maintenance):

The following positions support increased efforts for hatchery maintenance.

1.0 FTE Maintenance Mechanic 1

1.0 FTE Welder-Fabricator

1.0 FTE Electrician

1.0 FTE Equipment Operator

Salmon and Steelhead Monitoring:

5.6 FTE Scientific Technician 2 responsible for field operations: sampling and monitoring activities, installation of equipment, in season adjustments to equipment, data review and data management across multiple career seasonal positions.

1.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Biologist 2 project team member as business analysts and technical subject matter experts.

0.1 FTE Journey-IT App Development to facilitate merging newly collected data into existing centralized databases.

Crab Fishery and Humpbacks:

1.0 FTE Scientific Technician 4 tests electronic monitoring tools, coordinates with operations staff and policy staff, stakeholders, and electronic monitoring providers, implements electronic monitoring program, supervise two Sci Tech 2's.

1.5 FTE Scientific Technician 2 One full time staff and one career seasonal working 6 months per year to review fishery data, coordinate with fishermen, and troubleshoot problems.

Toutle & Skamania Hatcheries:

1.0 FTE Fish Hatchery Specialist 4 supervises employees and is responsible for implementing and managing a multispecies fish rearing program.

2.0 FTE Fish Hatchery Specialist 3 performs senior level professional technical and scientific fish culture duties and performs hatchery related maintenance.

2.7 FTE Fish Hatchery Specialist 2 performs journey level technical and scientific fish culture duties and performs hatchery related maintenance.

Fish Passage Rulemaking:

1.0 FTE Environmental Planner 4 is the division's specialist on fish passage and screening laws, policies, and rules. This position is responsible for the coordination and facilitation of the fish passage and screening rulemaking under Chapter 77.57 RCW. This position maintains an ongoing and effective system for the transparent development, implementation, and monitoring of agency fish passage and screening rules and legislation. Also, it improves business, regulatory, enforcement, and education processes through rules and policy to ensure the highest possible level of public compliance with Chapter 77.57 RCW while engaging with stakeholders.

Prioritization of Fish Barriers:

1.0 FTE Environmental Planner 5 is responsible for developing the comprehensive statewide fish passage strategy, working with tribes and regional recovery organizations, along with adaptively managing the strategy in reaction to new science, data, and prioritization strategies.

0.3 FTE IT Data Management – Entry – GIS Analyst 1 manages and analyzes the habitat quality, quantity, and connectivity metrics applied to

barriers in the Fish Passage and Diversion Screening Inventory database, thereby supporting a common framework for considering fish passage benefits statewide.

Riparian Systems Assessment:

1.0 FTE Cartographer 3 this position conducts mapping and accuracy assessment work required to complete the process.

1.0 FTE Environmental Planner 4 analyzes status and trends from subject matter experts at other organizations. This data is used to draw conclusions related to land use.

1.0 FTE Environmental Planner 5 provides scientific and information technology expertise and oversees the program.

1.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Research Scientist 2 reviews cross-agency data and layers and serves as a cross agency subject matter expert on the combination of the data layers to support policy work. This data is used to draw conclusions related to land use.

1.0 FTE IT Data Management -Journey provides data management, processes management, and automated image processing. It manipulates dataset to support the planner and RS2 positions and make the data more comparable. Additionally, they will interact with data managers in other counties and serve up agency layers for local governments. They also help manage the high data storage and back-up requirements.

1.0 FTE IT Data Management-Entry provides data management, process management and automated image processing. Also helps manage the high data storage and back-up requirements for state-scale high resolution data.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Reductions in identified efforts will diminish the state’s ability to meet three of its Results Washington goals (Sustainable Energy and Clean Environment, Prosperous Economy, and Effective, Efficient & Accountable Government), will diminish the Department’s ability to meet all four Department Strategic Plan priorities (Proactively Address Conservation Challenges, Engage Communities through Recreation and Stewardship, Deliver Science that Informs Washington’s Most Pressing Fish and Wildlife Questions, and Model Operational and Environmental Excellence), and will diminish the Department’s ability to do its foundational work (Activity Inventory) to Preserve and Restore Aquatic Habitat and Species, Preserve and Restore Terrestrial Habitats and Species, Manage Fishing Opportunities, and Produce Hatchery Fish.

Performance Outcomes:

See attachments for further details for each portion.

Lack of funding will decrease WDFW’s salmon and steelhead production, increase pressure from predation on ESA-listed salmon stock and reduce spawning rates due to increase inefficiencies in fish passage barrier removals. Crab fisheries will be endangered due to lack of ESA compliance. Further, lack of funding will increase wolf-livestock conflicts, and potentially decrease social support for wolf recovery.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Communications and Public Engagement divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department receive ongoing maintenance level funding to ensure there is not degradation of services to the communities we serve.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

This funding request is comprehensive of many critical areas across the Department that the Governor and Legislature previously funded. Without additional funding, the Department will not be able to continue this work as intended. The scope and size of these reductions are indeterminate; however, all work has the potential to impact communities disproportionately.

Target Populations or Communities:

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support specific communities such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted groups. The Department is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems to be sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities and many others are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package ensures full funding is provided for decision packages that were previously only provide one-time funding. This covers a diverse set of Puget Sound related ongoing programs that are implementing a number of 2022-2026 Action Agenda strategies.

The decision package components Fish Passage Rule Making and Prioritization of Fish Barriers is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers. The decision package directly implements 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers Action (ID#152) Inventory and assess all fish passage barriers (culverts, dams, etc.). Prioritize, sequence, and implement fish passage barrier correction or removal in watersheds by supporting WDFW is the prioritization and sequencing of barriers.

The decision package component Riparian Systems Assessment is aligned with 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 4 Riparian Areas. The decision package directly implements 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 4 Riparian Areas Action (ID#11) Establish and implement science-based riparian protection, restoration, and management policies that result in a minimum '1 Site Potential Tree Height' forested riparian area standard by supporting WDFW in developing the data and analysis on riparian habitat management and policy choices.

The decision package component Streamflow Policy Support is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 7: Freshwater Availability. This decision package directly implements the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 7: Freshwater Availability Action (ID #29) Understand and plan for future water needs and changing climate and ecosystem conditions by engaging all water users in a watershed to identify specific actions around water science, technology, management, and conservation by ensuring WDFW policy and technical expertise engages in the proactive planning for how Washington will management and protect instream habitat and water levels under changing climate.

The decision package components Salish Sea Marine Mammal Surveys, Increase Fish Populations (Hatchery Maintenance), and Salmon and Steelhead Monitoring is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery. The decision package directly implements 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery. It implements the Action (ID#204) Reduce displacement, competition, and predation of imperiled native species caused by native or invasive species by conducting marine mammal surveys; the Action (ID#205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by supporting hatchery maintenance; and the Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by supporting improved monitoring for in-season management.

This decision packages fulfills the second criteria— support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by ensuring key WDFW ongoing programs such as Fishery and Hatchery Science and Management continue to provide relevant science for natural resource management

decisions.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant OTF Recommendation 8 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent by ensuring funding for hatchery maintenance. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy Recommendation 3 Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to their historical habitat by supporting the WDFW Fish Passage ongoing program in rule making and prioritization. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy Recommendation 6 Address predatory and food web issues for salmon by funding Salish Sea Marine Mammal Surveys.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

See attachments for further details, major items of note.

Toutle & Skamania Hatcheries:

Tule fall chinook are an important species for Makah Tribal fisheries. Making reductions would be inconsistent with tribal co-manager agreements.

Riparian Systems Assessment:

The loss of funding would hinder jurisdictions from understanding how to accommodate new development and to anticipate effects of climate change in ways that minimize unintended negative consequences for their regulatory requirements for riparian zones.

Stakeholder Response:

See attachments for further details, major items of note.

Toutle & Skamania Hatcheries:

These shortfalls, if not resolved, will result in significant reductions to salmon conservation and production activities which Washington recreational and commercial fishing groups have advocated for at both the federal and state level for decades.

Wolf Recovery:

Reduced access to non-lethal deterrents would be a concern for both conservation groups and ranchers who would have reduced access to these tools.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$2,591	\$2,591	\$5,182	\$2,591	\$2,591	\$5,182
Obj. B	\$1,023	\$1,023	\$2,046	\$1,023	\$1,023	\$2,046
Obj. C	\$450	\$350	\$800	\$350	\$350	\$700
Obj. E	\$755	\$755	\$1,510	\$755	\$755	\$1,510
Obj. G	\$98	\$98	\$196	\$98	\$98	\$196
Obj. J	\$2	\$2	\$4	\$2	\$2	\$4
Obj. T	\$1,567	\$1,531	\$3,098	\$1,531	\$1,531	\$3,062

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Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) uses charter air services for animal capture, radio tracking, and aerial surveying to help preserve and protect Washington’s fish and wildlife. The Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (DES) master contract manages the different charter air services available. Due to an economic adjustment, the master contract experienced a 10.17% price increase for the fiscal year 2023. WDFW is requesting funds to help cover the increased costs incurred this fiscal year due to the applied economic adjustment. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$76	\$76	\$152	\$76	\$76	\$152
Fund 02R - 1	\$6	\$6	\$12	\$6	\$6	\$12
Fund 110 - 7	\$1	\$1	\$2	\$1	\$1	\$2
Fund 24N - 1	\$58	\$58	\$116	\$58	\$58	\$116
Total Expenditures	\$141	\$141	\$282	\$141	\$141	\$282
Revenue						
110 - 0549	\$1	\$1	\$2	\$1	\$1	\$2
Total Revenue	\$1	\$1	\$2	\$1	\$1	\$2

Decision Package Description

Charter air services are a fundamental tool WDFW uses to maintain and monitor many key programs and projects. Aircraft rentals are essential for WDFW to manage and monitor the following activities successfully:

- Fish program: stock control and surveys of chinook spawning, steelhead escapement, shellfish, clam, and shrimp harvesters.
- Wildlife program: animal capture and population monitoring (wolf, elk, mountain goat, bighorn sheep, and mule deer), herbicide and noxious weed control on wildlife areas.



*Figure 1. Wildlife Program
 – Aerial Elk Survey (WDFW)*



*Figure 2. Wildlife Program
 – Mule Deer Aerial Survey (WDFW)*

The language built into section 3.3 of the master contract (06119) allows for economic adjustments every 12 months after the contract's effective date of May 1, 2020. The economic adjustment rate is variable and based on the most recent year indices from The United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor, and Statistics.

Table 1 shows the previous fiscal year expenditures and the increasing trend seen during the 2019-21 biennium. The fiscal year 2022 expenditure increase corresponds to the May 2021 economic adjustment of 6.4%. In fiscal year 2023, DES enacted a 10.17% economic adjustment, which increased the prices of these needed services. Due to the in-place master contract governing the economic adjustment increase will limit the capacity of WDFW to preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage fish and wildlife, as currently in place funding does not account for this adjustment.

Table 1. WDFW Aircraft Rental Expenditures

Program Title	Actual Expenditures			Forecast
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
04000 – Wildlife	\$761,923.26	\$754,131.23	\$841,705.25	\$927,307.00
05000 – Fish	\$145,199.23	\$235,929.11	\$186,768.68	\$205,763.00
Total	\$907,122.49	\$990,060.34	\$1,028,473.93	\$1,133,070.00
DES - Economic Adjustment			6.40%	10.17%

The requested funding is necessary for the Department to offset the increased price of charter air services brought on by the fiscal year 2023 economic adjustment of DES master contract 06119. The funds are critical to maintaining current fish and wildlife activities, including animal capture, animal radio tracking, and aerial surveying of salmon, steelhead, shellfish, wolf, elk, mountain goat, bighorn sheep, and mule deer and their habitat.

As charter air services are an essential component of properly managing and monitoring many key WDFW activities and projects, if additional funding is not secured, funds will need to be moved from other activities, which could potentially have a negative impact on currently funded projects essential to the Department.

The DES master contract 06119 dictates the vendors for air charter services, and few alternatives are available. A master contract is a mandatory-use contract established and administered by Enterprise Services. The Department is only allowed to contract a non-master-contract vendor when unique performance specifications are required.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

N/A

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

The requested funding is equivalent to the DES Economic Adjustment of 10.17% beginning in fiscal year 2023. Goods and services, object E, equal to the aircraft rentals/leases total \$105,000. In addition, an infrastructure and program support rate of 33.5% is included in object T, calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Actual Expenditures		Forecast
Program Title	FY22	FY23
040 - Wildlife	\$841,705	\$927,307
050 - Fish	\$186,769	\$205,763
Total	\$1,028,474	\$1,133,070
<i>DES - Economic Adjustment - EA</i>		<i>10.17%</i>
<i>Expected expenditure increase</i>		\$104,596

Workforce Assumptions:

N/A

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

The decision package responds and supports the state's ability to achieve the Results Washington Goal 5: Efficient, Effective, and Accountable Government. This request is critical to guaranteeing the Department's capacity to preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage fish and wildlife.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This decision package supports the Department Strategic Plan strategy of "Proactively address conservation challenges," guarantying current efforts to manage and recover fish and wildlife species. In addition, this proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the performance outcome:

- 90 percent of the public reports trusting WDFW to do what is right for the fish and wildlife management in our state.
- 80 percent of species of greatest conservation need have been surveyed and incorporated into strategies and plans that ensure their conservation

WDFW Activity Inventory

Manage Fishing Opportunities: \$6,000 annually, 001-1 General Fund State. \$6,000 annually, 02R ALEA. \$14,000 annually, 24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation.

Fish resources are assessed, monitored, and evaluated to ensure harvest and resource management actions are sustainable and based on sound science. To understand what fishery resources are available, department staff conduct field investigations to count the number of juveniles migrating to saltwater and adults returning to freshwater and conduct tests fisheries to verify abundance assumptions. The department develops and uses fish management harvest models that consider the annual variability of fish abundance to maximize recreational and commercial opportunities while minimizing risks to wild fish populations.

Manage Hunting Opportunities: \$70,000 annually, 001-1 General Fund State. \$44,000 annually, 24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation. \$1,000 annually, 110-7 Special Wildlife.

Department employees conduct wildlife surveys to collect information on the age, sex, number, location, and distribution of game animals. These data help determine if populations are decreasing, increasing or stable which aids the Department in establishing hunting opportunities that ensure population conservation.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Outcome:

- Priority research needs being met

Fish stock control and wildlife population monitoring is the primary goal of the work described in this decision package. The charter air services are critical for the Department's mission, our salmon recovery efforts, and wildlife conservation.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The Department completes community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. It is crucial for the Department to maintain charter air services functions to ensure there are no degradation services to the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying inflationary cost increases (DES Economic Adjustment) that will have a negative impact on the Department's business operations and restrict mission-critical work.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

This request is essential for the Department's activities. Without additional funding for the charter air services costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. Moreover, cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equitable lens as the Department is forced to shift resources.

Target Populations or Communities:

The Department is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems to be sustainable and accessible for all communities, especially in rural areas that significantly benefit from fishing, hunting, and related recreational and commercial industries. The charter air services are critical for the WDFW activities, providing residents sustainable fishing and recreational wildlife experiences and preserving economic and cultural opportunities for all.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 14: Invasive species and is directly aligned with Action (ID#46) Prevent and rapidly respond to the introduction and spread of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species, including green crab, predatory fish, and invasive plants by implementing key opportunity Use surveillance to detect invasive species and better understand pathways of introduction by ensuring WDFWs capacity to monitor and address invasive plants in wildlife areas. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is directly aligned with Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by implementing key opportunity, improve monitoring for in-season management by ensuring WDFWs capacity to perform surveys of chinook spawning related to salmon recovery. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts by ensuring WDFWs capacity to restore or enhance game wildlife through animal capture and population monitoring (e.g., wolf, elk, mountain goat, bighorn sheep, and mule deer).

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by ensuring that WDFW can maintain aerial surveys and programs that support fish and wildlife protection. This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 1 Significantly increase investment in restoration and acquisition of habitat in areas where Chinook stocks most benefit Southern Resident orcas by supporting adaptive management of Chinook through spawning surveys. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant SALMON STRATEGY recommendation 8 Strengthen science, monitoring and accountability by supporting adaptive management of Chinook through spawning surveys and monitoring.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

A master contract is a mandatory-use contract for WDFW, established and administered by Enterprise Services. Master contract 06119 results from competitive solicitations run by Enterprise and adopted as master contracts for Washington, including state and local government entities.

Stakeholder Response:

N/A

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. C	\$105	\$105	\$210	\$105	\$105	\$210
Obj. T	\$36	\$36	\$72	\$36	\$36	\$72

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Department of Fish and Wildlife
 2023-25 Regular Budget Session
 Maintenance Level - FE - Fisheries Enforcement Compliance

Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) received funding in the 2022 Supplemental Operating Budget to increase fishery enforcement compliance. The original proposal increased funding and staffing levels strategically between the first and second years to ensure that the Enforcement Program had capacity to grow strategically. The Department only received partial funding for this proposal because the increase in year two funding and staff was not included in the enacted carryforward level budget. To increase officer presence as intended, the Department is requesting the remaining funding and staff, ongoing. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$1,818	\$2,218	\$4,036	\$1,818	\$1,818	\$3,636
Total Expenditures	\$1,818	\$2,218	\$4,036	\$1,818	\$1,818	\$3,636

Decision Package Description

In the 2022 Supplemental Operating Budget, WDFW submitted a proposal to increase fishery compliance with additional enforcement staff that was designed to strategically increase the number of officers over time. The funding request included 15 FTEs in total, and a one-time purchase of a coastal vessel. However, the Department only received the funding levels proposed in the first fiscal year, which included only 5.9 of the 15 FTEs. Due to the nature of the supplemental request, the second year (which had the increase of funding for the remaining officers and vessel) was not included in the ongoing funding. These remaining positions are still needed to accomplish the original intent of the proposal. The Department chose to only include a partial amount in the first year to ensure that the Enforcement Program had capacity to grow strategically. The funding in this request is consistent with the initial proposal and is necessary for ongoing support.

People from all over the world are drawn to Washington's vast open spaces, pristine angling venues, diverse geographical landscapes, and unique marine and aquatic harvesting opportunities. Officers are encountering more recreational harvesters than ever before and as a result are also finding many gross over-limits of fish, shellfish, forestry products, and wildlife. The marine fisheries scope and

responsibilities of WDFW Police span large geographic areas and encompass many overlapping rules and regulations. Compliance is necessary to ensure that these fisheries remain viable and available for recreational, commercial, and tribal opportunities.

Currently WDFW does not have enough personnel to adequately enforce the agency's rules and regulations. Growing human populations, increase in agency-managed lands and use of those lands, and increase in natural resource law enforcement expectations add strain to this already-limited staff capacity. Presently there is only one officer for every 50,000 residents in Washington. In the past 25 years WDFW Police had a more reasonable ratio of one officer per 30,000 Washington residents. During the recent Covid pandemic, state lands experienced a correlating increase in usage and unfortunate uptick in habitat destruction, stream and waterway degradation and vagrancy. These types of destructive violations to our fisheries and waterways will go unchecked for longer periods of time when combined with limited numbers of officers. In turn these harmful activities pose a greater risk to local ecosystems, waterway, fisheries, and associated wildlife.

To implement this proposal as originally intended in the 2022 Supplemental Request, the Department requires the remaining 9.1 FTEs ongoing and one time vessel purchase. This is necessary to adequately enforce statewide fisheries paired with the increase in natural resource law enforcement expectations.

Increasing the number of Fish and Wildlife officers deployed along marine waterways increases compliance to management rules and regulation and provides additional natural resource protection, which results in more opportunity to all stakeholders. WDFW officers are present in every county, working seven days a week, but are geographically isolated and respond to a vast variety of natural resource issues. Extra officer capacity will allow WDFW Police to proactively patrol and manage all Washington state lands and waterways.

Tribal and WDFW law enforcement collaborate to address poaching and trafficking cases where non-tribal and tribal individuals co-conspired in violations. Alone, the jurisdictional reach of each entity is limited, but illegal harvests and markets have been disrupted where co-enforcement was encouraged. Increasing officers on marine waterways will only strengthen these partnerships.

Without the remaining funding, WDFW Police will continue to have limited capacity to employ proper strategies and focus sufficient resources toward addressing a key mission of the protection of our threatened and endangered species. The lack of adequate staffing does not allow WDFW Police to provide sufficient patrol vessel and officer presence in key geographic locations to protect these endangered species. Additionally, the coastal vessel was not included in the funding, and is a necessary investment to increase coverage.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This proposal does not expand or alter the original proposal, this funding request would simply complete the original intention of the proposal to increase the FTEs over time, and purchase one additional vessel.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Following the completion of the carry forward level transaction, initiated by the Office of Financial Management, House of Representative, and Senate fiscal analysts, it was determined that a maintenance level decision package would need to be submitted for the fiscal years 2024, 2025, and ongoing funding levels to be amended.

ESSB 5693, Laws of 2022, operating budget bill provided funding for this work in budget line item “S21” Increase Fisheries Enforcement provided \$1,283,000 and 5.9 FTE in fiscal year 2023 and ongoing. The legislative budget note described this funding as, “Ongoing funding is provided for Fish and Wildlife officers to provide enforcement of commercial and recreational fisheries. Enforcement officers will be focused on the coast, Straits, and Puget Sound.”

In the Governor’s proposed operating budget in December 2021, funding was provided at the same level as the final legislative budget. It was initially described as, “Fish and Wildlife officers are essential in maintaining safe and properly managed commercial and recreational fisheries. As pressures on recreational fishing increase, additional law enforcement officers are needed to ensure public safety, enforce fisheries regulations, and protect the state’s natural resources from illegal gain or profit. Thwarting illegal activity supports fisheries conservation efforts, protects habitat, and reduces over-harvest of salmon runs.” In budgeting reports, the funding for this item as classified as a “custom” cost type, indicating that a future adjustment was expected.

This maintenance level funding request effectively brings the funding to the level necessary to complete the work as intended in the original proposal.

The table below is the carryforward level analysis from May.

Fund	Table 1: Funding per Budget Cycle								
	Final Base + CFL			Change in 23-25 budget			Final Base + CFL		
Fiscal Year	FY24	FY25	23-25	FY24	FY25	23-25	FY24	FY25	23-25
001-1	1,283	1,283	2,566	1,818	2,218	4,036	3,101	3,501	6,602

Table 1: Funding per Budget Cycle shows the discrepancy between

Salaries and benefits, object A and B, for 9.1 FTE positions totals \$1,818,000 beginning in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing. Goods and services, object E, include \$17,000 per FTE, per year, for standard costs of each WDFW fully commissioned police officer; this includes agency standard costs and police specific costs.

Capitalized equipment costs, object J, include \$400,000 one time in fiscal year 2025 for a coastal vessel purchase.

Workforce Assumptions:

0.7 FTE Fish & Wildlife Sergeant- New supervisory position in the Northwest coast of the Olympic Peninsula to create a new operational work unit to focus on coastal law enforcement work.

8.4 FTE Fish & Wildlife Officers- General authority peace officers specifically trained to protect natural resources. All the positions directly and indirectly support marine fisheries, with geographic deployment impacting the specifics of law enforcement activities facilitating compliance.

If this proposal is funded, these positions will be added to the previously funded two Fish & Wildlife Lieutenants, .3 FTE of a Fish & Wildlife Sergeant, and 3.6 FTE Fish & Wildlife Officers. This will bring the total to 15 FTES.

The FTE’s above represent the remainder to be funded by this technical correction. The previous description of the full FTE count is below:

Regional Marine Fishery Coordination (2 FTE):

2.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Lieutenants to support coastal and Puget Sound fishery operations. This additional capacity will move the marine fishery coordination to dedicated staff. These senior managers will have an internal and operational focus to facilitate the compliance actions for all marine fisheries. These roles will ensure better coverage of emergency rules and on-the-ground coordination with other law enforcement organizations.

Northwest Coast Detachment (2 FTE):

1.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Sergeant and 1.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Officer. This additional capacity on the Northwest coast of the Olympic Peninsula will allow WDFW Police to create a new operational work unit (a detachment) to focus on coastal work, while the existing detachment on the northeast portion of the peninsula can focus on the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

Increased Coastal Law Enforcement Presence (5 FTE & one-time vessel procurement):

5.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Officers to be strategically deployed along the Pacific Coast and Olympic Peninsula to bolster capacity to address commercial and recreational fisheries without disrupting current obligations for hunting compliance, lands protection, habitat conservation, and public safety response. A one-time vessel purchase for a 30' rigid-haul inflatable boat (\$400,000 FY 2025) is associated with this request, as the increased staffing will be less effective without additional fleet investment.

Increased Puget Sound Law Enforcement Presence (2 FTE): 2.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Officers to be strategically deployed in the Puget Sound to bolster capacity to address commercial and recreational fisheries, wholesale dealer regulation, and marketplace compliance without disrupting current obligations for hunting compliance, lands protection, conservation efforts, and public safety response.

Increased Columbia & Snake Rivers Law Enforcement Presence (2 FTE): 2.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Officers to be strategically deployed along the Columbia and Snake Rivers to bolster capacity to address fisheries with ESA impacts without disrupting current obligations for hunting compliance, lands protection, conservation efforts, and public safety response.

Additional Co-Management (non-salmon/steelhead fisheries) & Habitat Law Enforcement Presence (2 FTE): 2.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Officers to be strategically deployed to address aquaculture net pens regulation, commercial and recreational fisheries (shrimp, crab, and shellfish), and habitat conservation protection.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve four Results Washington goals: Goal 2: Prosperous Economy, Goal 3: Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment, Goal 4) Healthy and Safe Communities, and Goal 5: Efficient, Effective, and Accountable Government. This proposal is fundamental for the Department to deliver these goals because they can only be fully accomplished if the request is fully implemented. Additional enforcement officers will allow the Department to provide these essential services to the public.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This decision package directly supports the Department's 25-Year Strategic Plan strategy "Proactively Address Conservation Challenges," and "Engage Communities Through Recreation and Stewardship". Implementing the fisheries enforcement compliance proposal as originally intended will allow the Department to increase officer presence across the state. Their presence and community engagement will work towards WDFW's 25-Year Strategic Plan.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Preserve and Protect Aquatic Habitat and Species

WDFW Enforcement regulates established recreational fishing seasons by patrolling open and closed waterways of the State of Washington.

WDFW Enforcement regulates recreational fishing activities by enforcing rules and regulations pertaining to the methods, times, places, and way fish are harvested/caught. The regulation of recreational fishing includes all fishing regardless of season or user group.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Number of confirmed dangerous wildlife incidents mitigated each year
- 90 percent of the public reports trusting WDFW to do what is right for the fish and wildlife management in our state

WDFW Enforcement officers provide a broad range of performance goals due to the nature of their work. The primary goal of this package is to increase fishery enforcement compliance, however other goals will also be met indirectly because of increased fishery enforcement.

Equity Impacts**Community outreach and engagement:**

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities.

Additional officers will assist with identifying opportunities to strengthen relationships with traditionally underserved populations that further enhance recreational opportunities. Officers will in turn be able to bridge cultural gaps that are periodically encountered in field environments which will improve relationships with the citizens of WA state over time.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Without additional funding for these increased/new costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not directly connected to specific communities, however cutting services, and shifting resources will hinder the Department's ability to apply an equitable lens.

Target Populations or Communities:

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support specific communities such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted groups. The Department is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems to be sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities and many others are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is directly aligned with Action (ID 206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by implementing two key opportunities: Improve public education and outreach; increasing funding for enforcement, and Reduce illegal fishing, by increasing WDFW capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related to salmon harvest and addressing illegal fishing. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 17 Responsible Boating and is directly aligned with Action (ID #68) Promote implementation of and compliance with laws and guidelines for boaters and vessels to protect Southern Resident Orcas by implementing key opportunity, Enforce and adaptively manage rules for boating around orca considering best available science and the results of marine spatial planning efforts; monitor and provide additional protection for vulnerable orca by increasing WDFW capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related to responsible boating in Puget Sound, and for wildlife including orcas.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 25 Economic Benefits by ensuring that a thriving natural resource sector continues by increasing capacity for WDFW's capacity to enforce guidance and regulations on commercial and recreational fisheries. This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Cultural practices and local foods and is indirectly aligned Action (ID #86) Increase number, accessibility, and protections for multi-use and multi-cultural natural spaces (for example, fish and shellfish harvesting, camping, boating, and gardening, etc.), including green spaces and waterways, by increasing WDFW capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related marine fisheries and aquaculture.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by ensuring continued WDFW program capacity to enforce existing guidance regulations related to commercial and recreational fisheries and responsible boating. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce strategy recommendation 3 Apply and enforce laws that protect habitat by increasing WDFW capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related to salmon harvest and other wildlife. This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon strategy Recommendation 1 Protect and restore vital salmon habitat by increasing WDFW's capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related to marine fisheries.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

As a statewide organization, WDFW Police has officers in every region and patrol responsibilities in every county. Complete funding for this work will improve WDFW Police effectiveness, which will in turn make WDFW a stronger law enforcement partner to local police, county sheriffs and courts, and other state enforcement and criminal justice agencies. As WDFW Police will be a better partner to local, county, and state enforcement agencies, it will also be better able to partner with tribal enforcement.

Stakeholder Response:

N/A

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$890	\$890	\$1,780	\$890	\$890	\$1,780
Obj. B	\$295	\$295	\$590	\$295	\$295	\$590
Obj. E	\$142	\$142	\$284	\$142	\$142	\$284
Obj. J	\$0	\$400	\$400	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. P	\$11	\$11	\$22	\$11	\$11	\$22
Obj. T	\$480	\$480	\$960	\$480	\$480	\$960

Agency Contact Information

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Department of Fish and Wildlife
2023-25 Regular Budget Session
Maintenance Level - HF - Hatchery Fish Food Cost Increases

Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) hatcheries produce fish that support Washington’s tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries and contribute to fish recovery efforts listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). WDFW requests funding and spending authority to meet fish food costs that continue to rise due to the global market conditions associated with fish food production. Without funding to offset increased fish food costs, salmon and trout plants into local waters will likely be reduced and/or potential hatchery closure(s) may be needed. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$116	\$116	\$232	\$116	\$116	\$232
Fund 02R - 1	\$83	\$83	\$166	\$83	\$83	\$166
Fund 04M - 1	\$103	\$103	\$206	\$103	\$103	\$206
Fund 104 - 1	\$12	\$12	\$24	\$12	\$12	\$24
Fund 24N - 1	\$206	\$206	\$412	\$206	\$206	\$412
Total Expenditures	\$520	\$520	\$1,040	\$520	\$520	\$1,040

Decision Package Description

Fish food purchased by WDFW supports salmon and trout production for tribal, commercial and recreational fisheries in the state of Washington, as well as recovery and conservation programs for fish populations listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. Over the past several years the price of fish food has stayed relatively level until fiscal year 2022. Since the Fish Program’s Hatchery Division established its biennial budgets for fish food at the beginning of the 21-2023 biennium, the top two fish food vendors used have increased their prices twice.

	7/1/21 - 12/31/21	1/1/22 - 6/30/22
Vendor	Price increase %	Price increase %
Bio Oregon	17%	1%
EWOS	4%	5%

Additional details on fish food prices are available in the attached Pricing Sheet Matrix document.

These price increases have resulted in overspending of fish food budgets in state accounts by \$620,000 in fiscal year 2022. Given where fish food prices started in fiscal year 2023 and the amount of funds budgeted in 2023, the Hatchery Division is anticipating a \$520,000 shortfall in fiscal year 2023. This shortfall will continue into fiscal years 2024 and 2025.

Fund	EAI	Annual Fish Food Budget	Annual Estimated Expenditures	Annual Shortfall
001	01*	1,359,221	1,475,225	(116,004)
02R	090	184,160	267,414	(83,254)
24N	030	177,204	383,682	(206,478)
04M	1M0	128,731	231,850	(103,119)
104	TPF	13,755	25,305	(11,550)
		1,863,071	2,383,476	(520,405)

See Assumptions and Calculations section below for details on how the budget and expenditure estimates are established.

The global market conditions (including fish meal and fish oil shortages) that drove the recent price increases continue to persist, inflating this necessary cost associated with fish production. The Fish Hatchery Division expects fish food prices to continue to rise in the near future.

The Department is requesting additional authority in the various state fund sources used to purchase fish food. This increased authority will ensure hatcheries have the proper level of funding to purchase the amount of fish food needed to produce the number fish required to meet tribal, commercial, and recreational fishery commitments.

The Department’s main priority is to maintain current fish production levels and fish health while remaining within hatchery operational budgets. Various strategies are used to offset minor fish food cost increases when possible. These include reprioritizing activities and budget resources within the Fish Program when opportunities allow as well as buying fish food ahead of new contract pricing when funding allows. However, the latter is not always viable due to the fish food having a relatively short shelf life.

There are alternative vendors that produce fish food at lower prices. However, every vendor uses slightly different ingredients, therefore not all fish food is created equally. There is a lot of risk associated with using a new type of fish food, the highest risk being the loss of fish, most commonly due to the fish rejecting the feed given to them. If the lower priced fish food were as effective at raising fish, hatcheries would utilize it. Unfortunately, this is not the case which is why changing vendors is not a viable alternative.



Figure 1. Fish food in bulk (WDFW)

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This is not an expansion or alteration of a current program. This request is needed to keep hatchery production funded at its existing production levels.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Goods and services, Object E, total \$520,000 for fiscal year 2024 and fiscal year 2025 and ongoing for fish food costs. To estimate the impacts of the fish food price increases the Department compared the differences between the amount that was budgeted for fish food in fiscal year 2023 and the actual fish food expenditures in fiscal year 2022. The Department estimates that fiscal year 2024 and 2025 expenditures are going to be at least the amount of it's fiscal year 2022 expenditures, since it's salmon and trout production goals remain the same in 2024 and 2025 as they were in 2022. This funding request is the difference between the expected fiscal year 2024 and 2025 expenditure amount and the funding amount available for fish food in fiscal year 2023, for state funded hatcheries.

Given this, how the fish food budget estimates are established for the biennium is a critical piece of information. Fish food costs are estimated by each stock (there are multiple stocks within each species of salmon and trout) produced at each individual hatchery. Each hatchery produces multiple stocks. These cost estimates are done separately by all 80 plus hatcheries. However, all hatcheries use the same methodology to estimate total fish food costs.

In this analysis it's important to understand the fundamentals of raising fish. When fish first hatch from the egg, they are very small, therefore they require a smaller feed size. As the fish grow in size, they are transitioned to larger feed sizes. Feed prices vary by feed sizes. Fish food manufacturers provide a scale informing which feed size is optimal for a fish size, which is measured by fish per pound. Feed costs are then estimated at each size interval until the fish reach their release size.

The following is an example of the methodology used by each hatchery to estimate fish feed costs per stock. Below the table you find definitions of each column.

POP	Start fish/lbs	Total start lbs	End fish/lbs	Total end lbs	Total lbs gain	Feed conversion	lbs feed need	PPP	Cost	TYPE
600,000	1000	600	525	1143	543	0.6	326	2.35	\$765.43	Bio Vita #0
600,000	525	1143	275	2182	1039	0.6	623	2.35	\$1,464.94	Bio Vita #1
600,000	275	2182	125	4800	2618	0.6	1571	2.35	\$3,691.64	Bio Vita #2
600,000	125	4800	90	6667	1867	0.6	1120	2.08	\$2,329.60	Bio Vita 1.2
600,000	90	6667	70	8571	1905	0.7	1333	1.96	\$2,613.33	Bio Vita 1.5
									\$10,864.93	

Column Title	Description
POP	population size, which is the starting number of hatched fish, based on production goals established in the brood stock document
Start fish/lbs	the starting number of fish per pound
Total start lbs	the total pounds of fish to start
End fish/lbs	the number of fish per pound which is the goal to reach before transitioning the fish to the next size of feed. These amounts are typically recommended by the fish feed manufacturer
Total end lbs	the total pounds of fish once the ending fish per pound goal is reached
Total lbs gain	the difference between the total starting pounds and the total ending pounds. This is the total pounds needed to gain to get the fish from the starting pounds to the ending pounds before transitioning
Feed conversion	the feed conversion rate is the total pounds of feed needed to gain one total pound of fish. For example, in smaller fish only .6 lbs of feed is needed (in some cases) to produce 1 pound of fish
Lbs feed need	the pounds of fish feed needed which is equal to the total pounds gained times the conversion rate
PPP	the price per pound of the size of feed needed
Cost	the price per pound times the pounds of feed needed
Type	feed type and size

The above calculation is done for each individual stock produced at each hatchery. The total state budget for fish food is the summation of these estimates.

For state funded hatcheries these calculations are completed at the beginning of the biennium when state budgets are established. Current feed prices at the time are used, which is why fish food price increases that occur during the biennium are so impactful to our state funded hatchery budgets.

Note that federal and local contract funded hatchery production is not impacted by feed price increases in the same way because the department is able to factor any price changes into the future contract budgets since contracts start and end throughout a biennium.



Figure 2. Feeding time! - Hatchery (WDFW)

Workforce Assumptions:

N/A

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor’s Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve the following Results Washington goals: Prosperous Economy. Producing hatchery salmon and trout helps protect marine ecosystems and support the survival of Southern Resident orcas and ESA listed Chinook. In addition, hatchery salmon and trout contribute to commercial and recreational fishing opportunities across the state, supporting jobs and communities that rely on the economic benefits of fishing.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This decision package supports the Department Strategic Plan strategy of "Proactively address conservation challenges," expanding current efforts to manage and recover at-risk fish and wildlife species. In addition, this proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the performance outcome:

- 25 percent increase in wild salmon

WDFW Activity Inventory

Produce Hatchery Fish - \$116,000 State General Fund, \$83,000 ALEA, \$206,000 Unrestricted Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation account, \$12,000 Limited Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account, and \$103,000 Recreational Fisheries Enhancement Account starting in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing.

WDFW hatcheries produce healthy fish to benefit the citizens of Washington State while providing conservation to natural origin salmonids. Hatchery production is critical for fishing opportunities throughout the state – trout, steelhead, and salmon rely on the presence of hatchery fish to protect and preserve natural runs. The Department operates over 80 hatcheries for fish production that benefit commercial and recreational fisheries and fulfill obligations to maintain tribal usual and accustomed fishing rights and comanager management plans. The additional funding requested to cover increased costs due to fish feed price increases is necessary to ensure the department can continue producing fish at the required levels.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Indicators:

- Threatened and endangered species population increases
- Value of commercial fishing in Washington State
- Total license sales achieved

Equity Impacts**Community outreach and engagement:**

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain its existing hatchery production levels to ensure there is not degradation of services to the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying inflationary cost increases to hatchery fish food that will have a negative impact on the Department's business operations and restrict mission critical work or advances/improvements throughout the Department if additional funding is not received.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Without funding to offset increased fish food costs, salmon and trout plants into local waters will likely be reduced and/or a potential hatchery closure(s) may be needed. It is yet to be determined which hatcheries would be impacted, but a decrease in production at a specific hatchery would impact the local tribal, commercial, and recreational fishing communities by reducing fishing opportunities.

Target Populations or Communities:

Washington's hatcheries provide economic opportunities for rural businesses and communities statewide that rely on commercial and recreational fishing revenue. They are also essential to preserving the historical and cultural heritage of fishing for tribal communities within the state.

This package supports the production of hatchery fish, which allows the department to continue:

- Supporting local economies (tourism, lodging, restaurants, wholesalers and retailers of recreational equipment, boats, and licenses),
- Providing family recreational opportunities, and
- Protecting Washington's fishing cultural heritage.

Commercial and recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state contribute significant revenue to local and rural businesses.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

N/A

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

WDFW hatchery production is a crucial element of fisheries co-management with tribes, in addition to collaborating and working with community partners to reach Department conservation goals.

Stakeholder Response:

WDFW Hatcheries operate across the state, providing tribal, recreational, and commercial fishing opportunities for residents, tourists, and conservation groups.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

Reference Documents

[Fish Feed Pricing Matrix_BioOregon_6.30.22.pdf](#)

[Fish Feed Pricing Matrix_EWOS_6.30.22.pdf](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. E	\$520	\$520	\$1,040	\$520	\$520	\$1,040

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

The physical copies of regulation pamphlets and booklets that the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) provides are essential for Washington’s citizens and the fish and game license dealers throughout the state. Printing regulation pamphlets and booklets is an unavoidable cost for the Department per RCW 77.12.184. This proposal requests increasing printing and shipping funding to provide, inform and promote access to fishing and game activities in all regions of the state. The Department's ability to provide paper pamphlets supports public opportunities to enjoy and participate in recreational fishing and hunting opportunities and allows the public the ability to achieve a stress-free experience, balanced with the confidence they are following regulations. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 071 - 1	\$18	\$18	\$36	\$18	\$18	\$36
Fund 24N - 1	\$147	\$147	\$294	\$147	\$147	\$294
Total Expenditures	\$165	\$165	\$330	\$165	\$165	\$330

Decision Package Description

The Department has been managing fishing and hunting for public use since the late 1800s. Overharvest of fish stocks and wildlife led to a need for WDFW’s mission to preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational opportunities. Part of the solution to the problem of overharvesting has been the publication of hunting and fishing regulations. WDFW began publishing fishing and hunting regulations in the early 1900s and has continued publishing hunting and fishing regulations annually. Currently, WDFW publishes a Washington Sport Fishing Rules pamphlet, a Washington Big Game Hunting Regulations pamphlet and a Washington Game Bird and Small Game Hunting Regulations pamphlet (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Current (2021-2022) fishing rules and hunting regulations pamphlets published by WDFW that is available to the public.

Washington’s hunting and fishing regulations are available to the public, free of charge, in various forms. Access to hunting and fishing regulations can be found on-line at [Home | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#). The 2021-22 sport fishing rules can be found at [Fishing regulations | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#) and hunting regulations can be found at [Hunting seasons and regulations | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#). These websites can be accessed online using a personal computer or a mobile phone. Washington Sport Fishing Rules can also be accessed through the Fish Washington mobile application.

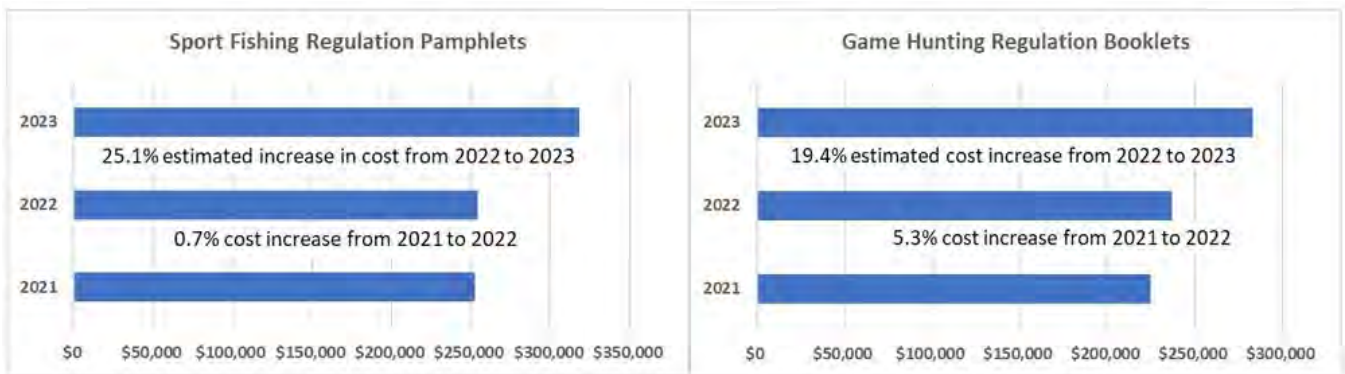
Not all people have internet access to the fishing and hunting regulations. Because there is still a high demand for physical copies of hunting and fishing pamphlets, WDFW needs to continue to print fishing and hunt pamphlets and make them available to the public. Physical hunting and fishing pamphlets are available at over 750 vendors throughout Washington State and 16 WDFW main offices and field offices.

The Sport Fishing Pamphlet is a 152-page magazine of editorial copy, 8.25” by 10.50” in size and produced with four-color process printing.

The Washington Game Bird and Small Game Hunting Regulations pamphlet is a 68-page magazine of editorial copy, 8.25” by 10.50” in size and produced with four-color process printing. The Washington Big Game Hunting Regulations pamphlet a 124-page magazine of editorial copy, 8.25” by 10.50” in size and produced with four-color process printing.

WDFW is required to supply hunting and fishing regulations to the public free of charge per RCW 77.12.184. This expenditure is a non-discretionary cost and fundamental for fish and game license dealers throughout Washington State. Significant supply chain and labor supply issues are impacting the printing industry. Rising costs of materials and a paper supply shortage have significantly increased WDFW’s costs to supply hunting and fishing pamphlets to the public.

Between 2021 and 2022, the expenditure for Sport Fishing Regulation Pamphlets increased 0.7% and 5.3% for Game Hunting Regulation pamphlets. Due to supply shortages and the rising price of materials, costs to publishers have increased significantly. The increase in cost is estimated to be 25.1% for Sport Fishing Regulation pamphlets and 19.4% increase in costs for Game Hunting Regulation pamphlets. Without the funding requested, it is likely WDFW will have to significantly decrease the number of pamphlets available to the public and to dealers without a budget increase (Graph 1.) This will create a hardship for Washington’s hunting and fishing public who have little or no ability to access WDFW’s website or mobile application.



Graph 1. Regulation Pamphlet expenditure 2021 and 2022 and estimated expenditure 2023.

WDFW requests increasing the regulation pamphlets budget by \$167,000 in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing. This funding will allow WDFW to continue printing and shipping fishing and hunting pamphlets to Washington State dealers and WDFW’s regional and field offices.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

Total costs have increased from \$477,514 in fiscal year 2021 to \$491,245 in fiscal year 2022 and a projected cost increase to \$601,103 in fiscal year 2023. See Table 1 below:

Category	Sub-category	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023*
Game Hunting Regulation Booklets	Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account	\$224,873	\$236,838	\$282,813
Sport Fishing Regulation Pamphlets	Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account	\$234,041	\$235,757	\$299,690
Sport Fishing Regulation Pamphlets	Warm Water Game Fish Account	\$18,600	\$18,650	\$18,600
Total Expenditures		\$477,514	\$491,245	\$601,103

Table 1: The fiscal year 2023 cost estimate includes projected inflationary increases from the vendor, see Attachment A.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Goods and services, Object E, totals \$124,000 each fiscal year for printing regulation pamphlets, which includes printing set-up cost, pamphlet printing cost, and shipping. An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

N/A

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the Results Washington Goal: Efficient, Effective, and Accountable Government. It includes meaningful community and customer engagement in fishing and hunting policies and ensures equitable access to information throughout Washington State.

It fosters inclusiveness and diversity in Washington's hunting and fishing community by making hunting and fishing regulations available to the public in several formats. This also helps WDFW stay accountable and transparent in managing hunting and fishing resources. And this request will help WDFW build trust with our partners and the public by providing access to hunting and fishing regulations in multiple forms.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This package aligns the WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan in the following strategies:

- Engage communities through recreation and stewardship, promoting and educating the public about fishing and hunting regulations, delivering to hunters and anglers customer service, and providing community awareness and stewardship of agency goals.
- Model operational and environmental excellence, expanding ways for the Department to connect with residents.

In addition, this proposal improves the 25-year Performance goal:

- Increase participation in fish and wildlife-related activities, particularly among youth, racially diverse communities, hunters, anglers, and wildlife watchers.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Manage Fishing Opportunities, \$88,000 (\$70,000 Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account and \$18,000 Warm Water Game Account) in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing.

WDFW is responsible for the management of Washington's recreational fisheries. Providing Washington Sport Fishing Rules pamphlets to the public free of charge helps ensure fishing activity occurs in a lawful and sustainable manner. By providing these pamphlets to the public a greater portion of diverse communities will have the access to these same opportunities. These fishing opportunities contribute towards economic activity across Washington State.

Manage Hunting Opportunities, \$77,000 beginning in fiscal year 2024, ongoing, Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account

Access to free hunting pamphlets will help ensure wildlife populations will endure and provide future generations the opportunity to enjoy an abundant resource. These hunting opportunities will promote a healthy economy; protect community character; maintain an overall high quality of life while delivering high-quality hunting experiences for the human populations we serve. This also helps ensure hunting safety and make sure that regulations, such as time, place, and method of hunts, are upheld and statewide natural resources are protected. Successful management of hunting opportunities will result in sustained healthy and abundant game species populations. Those populations will maintain hunting opportunities and outdoor quality of life, opportunities to harvest quality protein and boosts local economies reliant on outdoor recreation.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department’s ability to achieve the following Performance Indicators:

- Threatened and endangered species population increases
- Total license sales achieved Number of angler days
- Percent change hunter opportunities
- Fisheries in compliance with harvest protection goals

This proposal increases opportunities for public access to hunting and fishing regulations which helps protect threatened and endangered species and helps keep fisheries in compliance with harvest protection goals. This also supports increased license sales for both hunting and fishing and helps increase angler days and hunting opportunity through the understanding of lawful harvesting.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The use of a printed pamphlet allows the entire group of hunters and anglers to have immediate access to the rules governing these activities. If access to the regulation’s pamphlets is not provided, individuals could find themselves in violation of hunting and fishing rules and may become subject to penalties and charges. This package mitigates the unintended consequence of excluding individuals who do not have internet access. By ensuring an appropriate level of communication, the Department helps everyone to follow the law and avoid costly infractions.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

It is expected that there are few, if any, disproportionate impacts from this proposal. However, if this proposal does not receive funding, there could be disproportionate impacts to those who rely on printed fishing and hunting pamphlets for the rules and regulations due to lack of personal or economic ability to access them electronically. There is a strong possibility of disproportional impacts if this proposal isn’t funded since some portion of hunters and anglers will not have access to license costs, seasons, and other rules and regulation associated with hunting and fishing.

Target Populations or Communities:

While the Department has promoted accessing fishing and hunting regulations on the WDFW website and on mobile devices hunter and anglers still use pamphlets. Fishing and hunting pamphlets expand ways for the Department to communicate with residents who lack access to electronic services.

Hunting and fishing pamphlets are fundamental to promote, inform and foster access to hunting and fishing activities in all regions of Washington State.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship and is directly aligned with Action (ID #159) Develop, fund, and promote culturally relevant projects and programs to encourage and incentivize behavior changes that will protect, restore, and enable responsible enjoyment and stewardship of Puget Sound by implementing key opportunity Increase understanding of the connections between outdoor recreation and stewardship activities by increasing WDFWs capacity to engage communities through recreation and stewardship, promoting and educating the public about fishing and hunting regulations, delivering to hunters and fishers customer service, and providing community awareness and stewardship of agency goals.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23: Good Governance by maintaining WDFWs ability to provide materials and be transparent about fishing and hunting regulations to the public. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#198) Communications materials should be locally relevant and clear and concise, avoiding jargon or overly technical language. Incorporate resources in various languages other than English for communications materials by supporting increased trust and transparency with the public through printed materials of fishing and hunting regulations.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary Criteria – support continuity, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 3 Apply and enforce laws that protect habitat by maintaining WDFWs ability to provide the public information about fishing and hunting regulations despite increased shipping and printing costs. This decision package indirectly implements the Salmon Strategy Recommendation 6 More effectively integrate salmon recovery into harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower by maintaining WDFWs ability to provide outreach about fishing and hunting regulations to the public including the Sport Fishing Rules pamphlet.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

N/A

Stakeholder Response:

This proposal retains participation and increases opportunities for recreational hunters and anglers. Communities and families surrounding hunting and fishing locations will benefit from these recreational opportunities. These opportunities are crucial for businesses and those in rural areas.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

Reference Documents

[WDFW Attachment A Regulations Pamphlets and Booklets.pdf](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. E	\$124	\$124	\$248	\$124	\$124	\$248
Obj. T	\$41	\$41	\$82	\$41	\$41	\$82

Agency Contact Information

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Department of Fish and Wildlife
 2023-25 Regular Budget Session
 Maintenance Level - PP - Pro-Equity, Anti-Racism (PEAR)

Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is committed to creating a Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) ecosystem in Washington state as outlined in Executive Order 22-04. The Department recognizes the unique environmental justice role it has in managing and allocating the state’s fish and wildlife resources. However, WDFW does not have the capacity to implement the PEAR Plan and Playbook as intended by the governor. WDFW proposes funding two new positions to expand its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) subject matter experts to accommodate the new planning and reporting requirements of the PEAR Act. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$356	\$340	\$696	\$340	\$340	\$680
Total Expenditures	\$356	\$340	\$696	\$340	\$340	\$680

Decision Package Description

In March 2022, Gov. Jay Inslee signed Executive Order 22-04, "Implementing the Washington State Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Plan and Playbook" which directed state agencies to comply with a new framework provided by the Office of Equity to examine equity issues across the state. The PEAR plan and playbook includes new reporting requirements for state agencies, including preparation of PEAR Annual Performance Report, consolidation of information pertaining to the quarterly performance review, and coordination with DEI Outreach Specialist. These reports will require the Department to collect quantitative and qualitative data on disparities for people and places impacted by our key business operations. The plan also requests state agencies to provide executive-level support and the resources needed to fulfill requirements under this Executive Order. This is a large undertaking that requires careful analysis to get the accurate information and effective outcomes.

WDFW staff who are DEI subject matter experts are in high demand across the Department. The DEI team has both an internal and external focus, working with agency leadership to review employee engagement surveys and other methodologies to improve agency culture and increase DEI competencies. This will be beneficial to PEAR requirements in the long term, but currently staffing is insufficient to implement the PEAR planning as intended. Given the complexity and capacity needed to complete this comprehensive plan long term, and cannot absorb the time commitment required of this critical task.

To address the new requirements of the PEAR Act, additional funding is needed to grow the existing DEI Team at WDFW. Given the current PEAR deadlines, the DEI team has had to forgo the daily workloads to accommodate deadlines, which is an unsustainable path to the Department's overall goals of promoting DEI within all branches of the Department.

The Department proposes hiring two additional staff to increase capacity and perform key requirements.

Alternatives explored

For the PEAR effort, two options besides what is listed in this package were explored. The first is a minimum effort with no additional hours expended, and the second is to use the consulting services of the Office of Equity.

Without additional staffing capacity, WDFW may not be able to effectively meet current and future legislative mandates while also meeting the needs of the Department's day-to-day DEI needs. The Department may have to postpone or compromise its DEI strategic planning as internal needs continue to grow, or future legislative requests develop. This would be detrimental to the Department's progress to address equity issues and could jeopardize existing relationships. Initiatives such as agency-wide intercultural awareness assessments, coaching and mentoring leadership and staff, regional site visits, and internal DEI training will be hindered due to the time commitment of maintaining requirements for the PEAR initiative.

The Office of Equity offers consulting services. However, these tend to be start up efforts to help agencies get on their feet. While WDFW values these services and may reach out for them in the future, the Department is committed to being experts on natural resource allocation and other issues, now with an enhanced DEI lens.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

WDFW has added capacity related to DEI over the past two biennia. In addition to funding social science staff to improve agency perspective on DEI external topics, WDFW employs one DEI Manager and three support staff across the Department. The DEI Manager, who was hired in response to the Governor's 2018 declaration for an Inclusive and Respectful Work Environment, has been a highly valuable subject matter expert for executive management. The support staff FTEs were funded in the 2022 Operating Supplemental budget to support the DEI Manager and address the increased demand for DEI related subject matter expertise. These positions include two Human Resource Consultants and one Management Analyst. These three positions were created in response to the huge increase of demand for the DEI Manager, who previously was the only subject matter expert for all DEI-related issues to the Department and was also in high demand by executive management. These positions are largely inward facing to meet needs of staff members. For example, the team regularly receives requests to visit other regions because various DEI-related needs have emerged. These new PEAR requirements mandate research and partnerships with external communities that can't be added to current role responsibilities. Dividing time and priorities to meet PEAR could adversely impact internal agency DEI matters.

As the PEAR Act is implemented, WDFW anticipates an increased workload to complete the reporting requirements and address its findings. Current DEI staff includes one FTE DEI Consultant who reports directly to the DEI Manager, is in Seattle to serve as a DEI resource for North

Puget Sound, the second FTE serves under the Public Engagement Division as an External Outreach focus, and a third FTE serves under the Public Engagement Division to provide data analysis of impacted communities.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries (object A) and benefits (object B) for 2.0 FTE total \$243,000 beginning in fiscal year 2024 and are ongoing. Goods and services (object E) include \$6,000 per year, per FTE, for standard employee costs, which cover an average employee's supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year. Additional object E expenditures include onetime funding for \$12,000 in fiscal year 2024 to promote DEI training within the existing Hunters Education operations. An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classifications and the associated work for full program deployments are as follows:

FTE WMS 1 for Equity Coordinator

This position will develop, implement, and report on the progress of the PEAR Strategic Action Plan for the Department. This position will provide executive-level support and resources needed to fulfill requirements of the executive order and increase capacity of the existing DEI team to meet new data requirements. As management this position will participate in interagency work groups and preparation of internal policies, data tools, and checklists to begin to assess agency efforts in alignment with our obligations and strategic plan values. In addition to the above, this position will be assigned the following duties from the agency requirements list in the Executive Order.

- Developing, implementing, and reporting on progress of the PEAR Strategic Action Plan.
- Gathering data, helping to improve communications, and updating (or recommending, where required) policies, and educating employees about ways to create a PEAR culture.
- Utilizing quarterly performance review process as best practice to monitor progress towards agency PEAR Strategic Action Plan goals
- Submitting a response to reports published by the Office of Equity on the agency's PEAR Strategic Action Plan performance. The agency's response must include the agency's progress on performance, the agency's action plan to address areas for improvement and corrective action, and a timeline for the action plan per RCW 43.06D.040(1)(e)(ii).
- Requesting and receiving consultation, guidance, technical assistance, and training from the Office of Equity as needed to implement this Executive Order.
- When appropriate, collaborate with the agency's Conservation Social Scientist and Natural Resource Economist on relevant projects to better understand and address the agency nexuses to EJ, including the integration of EJ considerations into agency plans and projects.

1 FTE Human Resource Consultant 4

This position will gather data, help improve communications, update policies and practices, and educate employees about ways to create a PEAR culture. This position will prepare and submit the PEAR Annual Performance Report to the Office of Equity, as well as other more frequent reports. In addition to the above, this position will be assigned the following duties from the agency requirements list in the Executive Order.

- Developing, implementing, and reporting on progress of the PEAR Strategic Action Plan.
- Gathering data, helping to improve communications, and updating (or recommending, where required) policies, and educating employees about ways to create a PEAR culture.
- Facilitating meetings of WDFW PEAR Team.
- Assisting with the PEAR EIR on an annual basis. PEAR Equity Impact Review (EIR) framework describes a five-step process that blends numerical data and descriptive, community narrative data to inform agency planning, decision-making, and implementation of actions that achieve equitable access to opportunities and resources that reduce disparities and improve equitable outcomes statewide.
- Preparing quarterly performance reviews to monitor progress towards agency PEAR Strategic Action Plan goals.
- Preparing a response to reports published by the Office of Equity on the agency's PEAR Strategic Action Plan performance. The agency's response must include the agency's progress on performance, the agency's action plan to address areas for improvement and corrective action, and a timeline for the action plan per RCW 43.06D.040(1)(e)(ii).
- Requesting and receiving consultation, guidance, technical assistance, and training from the Office of Equity as needed to implement this Executive Order.

- When appropriate, collaborate with the agency's Conservation Social Scientist and Natural Resource Economist on relevant projects.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package responds and supports the state's ability to achieve the Results Washington goal of Efficient, Effective & Accountable Government, explicitly in diversity, equity, and inclusion. This proposal is essential to guaranteeing DEI values are embedding into how the Department engages with the strategic plan, with measurable actions, establishing accountability, and continuous improvement throughout all levels of the organization. Including meaningful community engagement with Washingtonians when developing policies, designing programs, and allocating resources will ensure more equitable access to WDFW information, services, and resources.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This proposal aligns with two strategies of the Department's Strategic Plan: 1) Engage Communities Through Recreation and Stewardship by identifying how to eliminate unintentional bias and more effectively engage underserved communities in public processes; and 2) Model Operational and Environmental Excellence by tracking workforce diversity, equity, and inclusion measures, including developing measures for strengthening employee satisfaction and adopting best practices for staff retention and advancement.

In addition, this proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following performance outcome:

- 90% of the public reports trusting WDFW to do what is right for the fish and wildlife management in our state.
- 90% of employees report that they would recommend WDFW as a great place to work

WDFW Activity Inventory

Business Management & Obligations: 2.0 FTEs, \$356,000 in fiscal year 2024, \$340,000 in fiscal year 2025, ongoing, General Fund-State.

The Department's business management works comprehensively to support the entire Department and meets obligations. Department leadership and strategy are fundamental to address the state's environmental concerns while working within the challenging sociopolitical climate that comes along with natural resource work, including diversity, equity, and inclusion. An effective Department requires the administrative infrastructure and staff that successfully supports the needs and performs work directly in service to the mission.

Performance Outcomes:

Without additional staffing capacity, WDFW will not be able to effectively gauge agency performance as it relates to DEI and PEAR. Measures aimed at gauging performance will include those both internal and external to WDFW. Potential performance measures include: percentage of new WDFW employees from un- and/or under-represented backgrounds; percentage of new angler programs tailored to non-traditional angler backgrounds; percentage of new hunter education programs tailored to non-traditional hunter backgrounds; percentage of WDFW education and outreach materials tailored to non-English speaking residents; number of graduates from new angler programs tailored to non-traditional angler backgrounds; number of graduates from new hunter education programs tailored to non-traditional hunter backgrounds; number of un- and/or under-represented youth participating in WDFW programs; number of public signage tailored to non-English speaking users; number of reports and presentations focused on DEI and PEAR-related topics; and percentage of WDFW lands/resources users from un- and/or underrepresented backgrounds. Without additional staffing capacity, WDFW will be unable to fulfill its mandates and sufficiently address key inequities or disparities among Washington communities as it relates to WDFW and the resources it manages.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

WDFW is working to increase the Department's presence at community events that are specifically for Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) in the outdoors. Often these events take place all over the state and require driving and time away from projects in the office. It is critical to have visibility at as many events as possible to engage with more diverse communities and encourage their participation. Having a presence and talking with stakeholders is an important way to understand ways marginalized communities are being impacted and how we can better meet their needs. The number of organizations working to make the great outdoors a more inclusive and accessible place to groups that have been historically excluded, is growing in Washington state. By partnering with these organizations, we will have a better-informed strategy to increase engagement with populations that have historically been excluded due to structural racism and socio-economic disparities.

WDFW community outreach and engagement varies by program, team, and project. For example, the Department's new Conservation Social Scientist is currently working with the Asia Pacific Cultural Center, Empowering People in Communities, and Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (while based in Oregon, their reach extends into Southern WA), three community organizations to better understand how Black, African American, Asian American, Pacific Islander, Slavic/Eastern European (e.g., Russian and Ukrainian speaking) communities interact with and benefit from the natural environment, including through outdoor recreational opportunities (e.g., fishing, hunting, foraging, hiking, wildlife viewing, bird watching, etc.). This work is done through community-based research projects with the goal of utilizing community-derived data and information to make more inclusive and equitable WDFW decisions. Such engagement has offered some key insights, including more actively including such partners in key decisions, such as conducting early outreach and involvement when developing new programs, program, or project co-creation with new partners, ensuring effective language integration also considers cultural- or community-relevant content, and prioritizing long-term relationship building rather than short-term parachute engagement opportunities.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

None. Increase of engagement within the communities that statistically have low participation in hunting, angling, outdoor recreation, and conservation education will be focus audiences. Specifically, this includes populations in low-income neighborhoods, communities of color, people with disabilities, and non-English speaking neighborhoods.

Target Populations or Communities:

White people make up nearly 60% of the U.S. population, but more than 75% of visitors to national parks sites. They also account for nearly three-quarters of outdoor recreation participants in 2020. While Washington is often regarded as a mecca for nature enthusiasts, Black people made up less than 1.5% of visitors to state parks, despite representing more than 4% of the state population. This disconnect between communities of color and outdoor activities is a result of ongoing barriers to access, a history of exclusion from nature and public lands, and the ways we define outdoor recreation. These impacts are felt across racial groups in varying ways and this proposal will provide opportunities for direct engagement to reduce those barriers.

Scientific research has demonstrated that access and engagement with nature positively impacts people's health, wellbeing, and overall quality of life. This is illustrated by the Puget Sound Partnership's Human Wellbeing Vital Signs, which monitor human health and wellbeing as it relates to Puget Sound's ecosystem. For example, spending time in nature, whether in a wildlife area, urban forest, shoreline, or on the water, can improve people's physical health, psychological wellbeing, and even sense of belonging and attachment to place. By excluding people from nature and recreational opportunities, including hunting, fishing, hiking, foraging, wildlife viewing, and bird watching, they are also being inequitably denied opportunities to enhance their health, wellbeing, and quality of life. Racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities have historically been excluded from nature and outdoor recreational, cultural, and subsistence activities. By targeting these communities, WDFW can help enhance the health, wellbeing, and quality of life, including connections to nature and interactions with fish/wildlife. Such enhancements have been shown to have additional benefits overtime, including increased feelings of inclusion, and belonging (notably among new residents), changes in positive pro-environmental stewardship behaviors, increased positive attitudes towards natural resource governance, and eventual greater involvement in decision-making or management (e.g., volunteer and employment pathway development).

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship through supporting WDFW in creating more equitable access to recreation and stewardship opportunities by the implementation of the Washington State Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Plan and Playbook. This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship Strategy through the Action (#ID160) Identify and fund removal of barriers resulting in the exclusion of people from participating in recreation and stewardship activities by supporting WDFW in conducting environmental justice assessment tools and support for staff and project implementation to engage with underserved communities.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23 Good Governance by supporting WDFW in implementing the HEAL Act and increasing the ability of WDFW to implement best practices for including vulnerable populations and underserved communities in decision making. This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23 Good Governance through the Action (#162) Increase capacity for vulnerable populations and underserved communities to engage in environmental decision-making by supporting WDFW in implement the key opportunity to implement the HEAL Act by developing the necessary WDFW policies, procedures, and engaging with partners in HEAL Act implementation. This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23 Good Governance through the Action (#162) Increase capacity for vulnerable populations and underserved communities to engage in environmental decision-making by implementing the key opportunity Increase practitioner and decision-maker understanding of vulnerable populations and underserved communities by providing support and data analysis to WDFW staff to improve environmental justice outcomes.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

Executive order 22-04 outlines requirements for the Office of Equity and the need for agencies to work with that office.

Stakeholder Response:

Increased resources and capacity to the DEI Team will allow the Department to identify and address barriers to stakeholders. Possible stakeholders are agency employees, low-income populations, communities of color, residents with limited English proficiency, people with disabilities, and tribal populations. Funding this proposal will have a positive impact to the identified stakeholders.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

[Executive Order 22-04](#) details the ongoing requirements for the Office of Equity and all state agencies.

Reference Documents

[Executive Order 22-04 - Implementing PEAR.pdf](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$180	\$180	\$360	\$180	\$180	\$360
Obj. B	\$63	\$63	\$126	\$63	\$63	\$126
Obj. E	\$24	\$12	\$36	\$12	\$12	\$24
Obj. T	\$89	\$85	\$174	\$85	\$85	\$170

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Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is committed to meeting the Office of Financial Management’s (OFM) requirements of the Statewide Facilities Inventory Policy. Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 87, Leases; requires agencies to record detailed information about all state-owned and leased facilities in the Facilities Portfolio Management Tool (FPMT) to comply with RCW 43.82.150. However, WDFW does not currently have capacity to meet these requirements. To comply with the Statewide Facilities Inventory Policy, WDFW requires additional staff for location surveys and data entry.

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 24N - 1	\$155	\$155	\$310	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Expenditures	\$155	\$155	\$310	\$0	\$0	\$0

Decision Package Description

WDFW has been recording details of all state-owned and leased facilities in FPMT as required. By April 30, 2022, agencies were required to record all leases within the scope of GASB 87 that exceed the capitalization threshold of \$500,000 in total lease payments over the lease term. This requirement is related to the implementation of WorkDay and the launch of One Washington.

This requires WDFW staff to physically measure and record both building and individual workspace details from each of these leased and owned locations. This process is time consuming and labor intensive because of the statewide locations of facilities, and the manual measuring and data entry of every eligible workspace. The Department estimates there are currently 945 owned and 1,112 leased facilities located throughout the state.

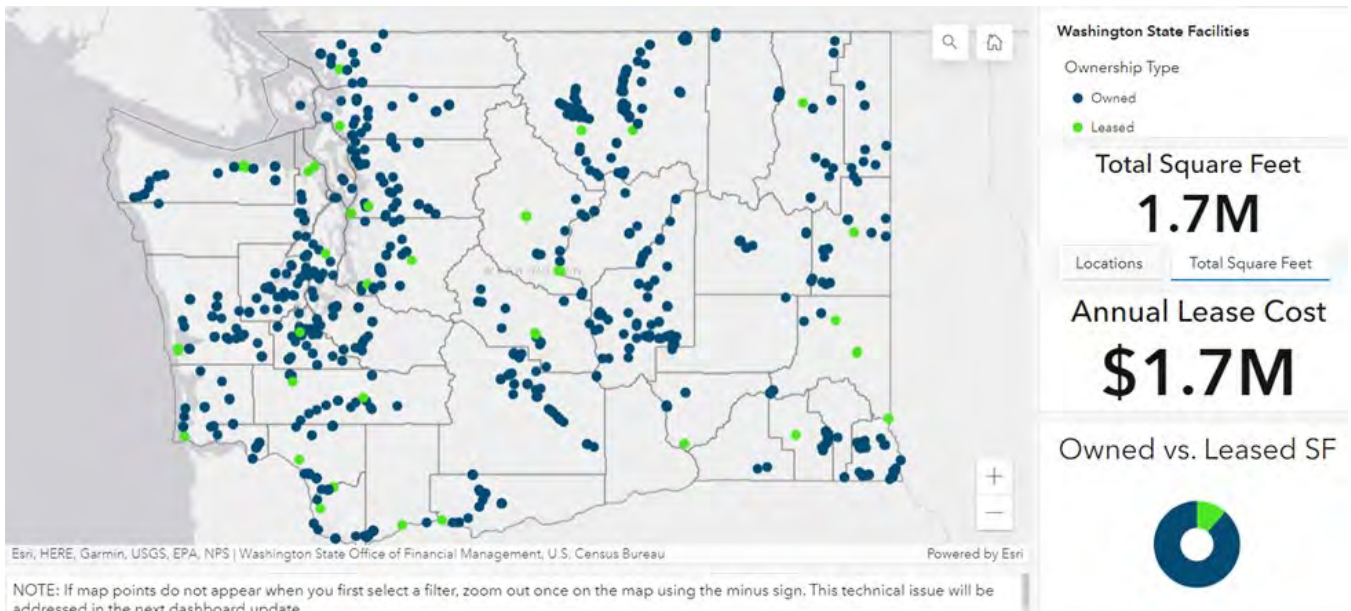


Figure 1. Washington State Facilities Inventory dashboard showing the WDFW owned and leased facilities statewide. Source: Washington State Facilities Inventory website

At current staffing levels, WDFW has been able to complete approximately 25% of the necessary data entry. This includes partial or incomplete information for leased and owned locations, but at current staffing levels the Department is not able to complete the remaining requirements of FPMT data entry within OFM timelines.

Proposed Solution

WDFW proposes to add one non-permanent full-time equivalent (FTE) to assist in the completion of FPMT data entry. In cooperation with the

Facilities Services Coordinator the proposed position would travel throughout the state to gather the necessary data for all locations. This position would also be responsible for entering the data in an efficient and effective manner to support the Department goals to meet the GASB 87 requirement.

WDFW does not currently have the staffing capacity to meet GASB 87 requirements. One alternative considered was to have the Facilities Services Coordinator complete FPMT data entry, however after entering approximately 25% of the data the coordinator was unable to complete the remaining work in addition to their daily workload. If left without additional capacity, WDFW will not be able to complete and maintain FPMT data entry due to the travel required to gather and record all the required facility information. If this request is not funded, WDFW is in jeopardy of being out of compliance.

[!\[\]\(e2376d476d06eb31946dc01a69a4403a_img.jpg\) Figure 1. Washington State Facilities Dashboard](#)

<https://wa-ofm.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=d4b368d370e4402bb2014c1584d74d71>

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

Since 1997, all Washington state agencies, departments, boards, commissions, and institutions are required to report their inventory of state-owned and leased facilities by June 30 annually (RCW 43.82.150). OFM's GASB issued GASB Statement 87 in June 2017. For the purposes of the Statewide Facilities Inventory, a facility is defined as: a building with at least one wall, a roof, and a permanent foundation, regardless of occupancy.

The Facilities Portfolio Management Tool (FPMT) was established in 2017 as the system of record for Washington state agencies facilities inventories, owned or leased. Beginning in October 2021, agencies were directed to verify information previously entered in FPMT and record any additional leases within the scope of GASB 87 that exceed the capitalization threshold of \$500,000 in total lease payments over the lease term, by April 30, 2022.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

The proposed position is a Fiscal Analyst 2, step L to collect and enter FMPT data. Salaries and benefits (objects A and B) total \$84,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2024 and \$84,000 in fiscal year 2025.

Goods and services (object E) include \$6,000 per year for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.

Travel costs (object G) total \$26,000 per year, including lodging, per diem, and vehicle costs. Lodging funding includes lodging for two nights per week for 50 weeks. Per diem costs for three travel days per week for 50 weeks include: Day 1: lunch, dinner//Day 2: breakfast, lunch, dinner//Day 3: breakfast, lunch.

Vehicle costs include \$7,584 per year in FY 2024 and FY 2025 for one SEDAN-HYBRID SW vehicle leased from DES at \$377 per month plus \$3,060 per year in FY 2024 and FY 2024 for mileage (\$0.17 per mile for 18,000 miles per year- mileage rate as of July 1, 2022). The use of a fully electric vehicle was considered for this position but not feasible due to the lack of charging stations in some of the more remote locations.

An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50 percent is included (object T) and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classification and the associated work for the new staff are as follows:

1.0 FTE Fiscal Analyst 2 (FA2)

The Fiscal Analyst 2 is non-permanent. Beginning in FY 2024 and continuing through FY 2025, this position travels to WDFW owned and leased facilities to gather required records and data by location and provides data entry into FPMT. Salaries and benefits total \$84,000 in FY 2024 and \$84,000 in FY 2025.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve the Governor's Results Washington Goal 5: Efficient, Effective & Accountable Government. This proposal is fundamental for the Department to deliver timely, effective compliance with the GASB 87, leases requirements and RCW 43.82.150.

Performance Outcomes:

The Capital and Asset Management Program (CAMP) facilities staff manage the planning and maintenance of all WDFW locations and are responsible for maintaining the records for them, both physical (floor plans, as-builts, blueprints, etc.) and digital, including the data entered in FPMT.

- 001046 Percentage of assets maintained to OFM standards
- 001051 Percentage of assets maintained to an adequate operational standard
- 001052 Percentage of assets maintained to safety standards

If funded, we anticipate the added FTE will complete approximately 80% of the initial data gathering and entry and, ideally, all of the FPMT data maintenance for all Department facilities. The remaining data will be collected by the Facilities Service Coordinator and/or the Facilities Planner 2. This proposal supports WDFW's ability to comply with the OFM's requirements contained in the GASB 87, Leases; and RCW 43.82.150 in a way that reduces the negative impact on the existing workload performance of the CAMP facilities staff.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through Communications and Public Engagement. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded, underserved, and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain accurate data records for all facilities to ensure there is not degradation of services to the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying required workload increases that will have a negative impact on the Department's business operations and restrict mission critical work or advances/improvements throughout the Department.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

This funding request is responding to increased workload demanded by the OFM requirements for maintenance of the State-wide Facilities Inventory. Without additional funding for these increased costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not directly connected to specific communities, however cutting services, and shifting resources will hinder the Department's ability to apply an equitable lens.

Target Populations or Communities:

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support specific communities such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted groups. The Department is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems to be sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities, and many others, are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

N/A

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

N/A

Stakeholder Response:

N/A

State Facilities Impacts:

The new staff will have an assigned duty station within the Puget Sound region, which will likely be at the regional headquarters or a field office. Within the current hybrid work environment of increased telework opportunities, there are no current concerns over lack of space to house staff at this location.

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

This package supports completion of OFM requirements for WDFW to be compliant with GASB statement 87, Leases and RCW 43.82.150

Reference Documents

- [Attachment A - GASB 87,Leases_Implentation.pdf](#)
- [Attachment B - GASB 87 Scope.pdf](#)
- [Attachment C - Facilities Inventory Data Requirements-Overview.pdf](#)
- [Attachment D - 2021 Facilities Inventory Agency Summary.pdf](#)
- [Attachment E - Owned Facilities Summary for Department of Fish and Wildlife.pdf](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$58	\$58	\$116	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. B	\$26	\$26	\$52	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. E	\$6	\$6	\$12	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. G	\$26	\$26	\$52	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. T	\$39	\$39	\$78	\$0	\$0	\$0

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Agency Recommendation Summary

During the 2019-21 biennium the Legislature provided increased funding to state government agencies for the information technology (IT) workforce. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) received additional funding in the 2021-23 Biennial budget and the 2022 Supplemental budget. Following the creation of the IT Professional Structure, state employees were reclassified. Many employees across the state pursued a reevaluation of their job classification by appealing the initial placement. Funding provided in the 2020 Supplemental budget was intended to fully fund the statewide reclassification process; however, it was insufficient to cover the increased costs from subsequent appeals and final placements. WDFW is requesting funding for increased compensation costs for the final four information technology positions to meet its obligation to compensate these employees at the rate determined by the State Human Resources (SHR).

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$37	\$39	\$76	\$39	\$39	\$78
Fund 001 - 2	\$16	\$16	\$32	\$16	\$16	\$32
Fund 001 - 7	\$2	\$3	\$5	\$3	\$3	\$6
Total Expenditures	\$55	\$58	\$113	\$58	\$58	\$116
Revenue						
001 - 0315	\$16	\$16	\$32	\$16	\$16	\$32
001 - 0549	\$2	\$3	\$5	\$3	\$3	\$6
Total Revenue	\$18	\$19	\$37	\$19	\$19	\$38

Decision Package Description

The Puget Sound region is one of the top four technological hubs in the nation with talent feeder schools like the University of Washington and global technology companies such as Amazon, Microsoft, and Google who attract top talent from around the world. Competing for talent is an ongoing challenge for state organizations and especially for jobs related to IT.

IT Professional Structure

The new IT classification and compensation structure was created in response to the state’s need to have a flexible and adaptable structure to keep pace with the rate of change in the technology industry. It effectively responds to recruitment and retention challenges within the state IT workforce. Supervisors are confronted with questions about how to manage employees to support the rapid rate of change in technologies, organizational structures, and business strategies. The new IT professional structure ensures organizational alignment and equity and creates a clear path for career advancement within the state.

Targeted wage increases were provided for the state’s IT workforce as a part of a state-wide initiative. IT positions across all state government were evaluated and reclassified to match job responsibilities more appropriately. Following the initial reclassification, either a staff member or their manager could file an appeal to have the new position assignment reviewed. These appeals were filed directly with the (SHR), which had the sole responsibility of reviewing all appeals following the reclassification. Once reviewed, the staff member and the manager were notified of the decision. Across all agencies, there were a total of 1,084 appeal cases, and as of July 1, 2022, there are still 32 remaining.

To date, there have been 27 WDFW professionals who have appealed their new position reclassification with all cases being resolved except for one. Due to the large number of appeals from various state agencies being processed by the SHR, the decisions regarding these appeals have been completed incrementally throughout the 2019-21 and 2021-23 biennia and may continue in the 2023-25 biennium and are consistent with Chapter 357-13 Washington Administrative Code.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

N/A

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and benefits total \$55,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$58,000 in fiscal year 2025 for the four IT staff. See Table 1 for total salary and benefit increases for the four staff members.

Table 1: 2023-25 Biennium Appeals and Reclassifications:

Category	Salary	Benefits	Total
Total Salary and Benefits as of 7/1/22	\$730,758	\$130,806	\$861,564
Total After Reclassification	\$826,344	\$147,916	\$974,260
Requested in DP	\$95,586	\$17,110	\$112,696

The reclassification reassigns staff to a lower step in a new job class. This has ongoing fiscal impacts as staff have the opportunity to grow in their new classifications, rather than “topping out” in their previous job class. As a result, the difference in pre-appeal and post-appeal salary increases over time reflects a shift from staff reaching a point of limited or no growth in step increases to increased growth in their new classifications.

Workforce Assumptions:

N/A

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve the Results Washington goal of Efficient, Effective & Accountable Government. This proposal aligns with the statewide initiative of the new information technology (IT) structure created in response to the state's needs to have a flexible and adaptable structure in the technology industry. The new IT professional structure ensures organizational alignment, career advancement, and equity within the state.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This decision package supports the strategic plan strategy of Model Operational and Environmental Excellence by developing measures for strengthening employee satisfaction and adopting best practices for staff retention and advancement. In addition, this proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following performance outcomes: 90% of employees report that they would recommend WDFW as a great place to work

WDFW Activity Inventory

Manage Fishing Opportunities: \$36,300 annually, General Fund (State, Federal, Local, and Interagency)

WDFW is responsible for the management of Washington commercial and recreational fisheries. Management of these fisheries includes maintaining compliance with complex intersections of tribal treaties, international agreements, case law, federal Endangered Species Act restrictions and monitoring of species health and populations. To manage fisheries, the department monitors and manages populations of both shellfish and fin fish; develops, negotiates and implements fisheries co-management plans; markets and sells fishing licenses; and manages licenses for commercial fishing groups. To effectively manage fisheries, the department maintains enforcement presence in commercial marine areas as well as recreational fishing locations for trout and anadromous fish, such as salmon.

Business Management & Obligations: \$12,650 annually, General Fund (State, Federal, Local, and Interagency)

An effective agency requires administrative infrastructure that supports the Department's mission, addressing the state's environmental concerns while working within the challenging sociopolitical and technology climate. The Department's business management unit supports the entire agency and meets obligations by providing agency leadership and strategy, communicating with the public and legislature, managing finance and contracts, managing human resources, and managing information technology infrastructure.

Produce Hatchery Fish \$6,050 annually, General Fund (State, Federal, Local, and Interagency)

WDFW maintains 81 hatcheries, either through direct ownership or management contracted with cities or counties in order to meet their mitigation requirements. These hatcheries produce healthy fish to benefit the citizens of Washington while providing conservation to natural origin salmonids. Production of hatchery fish is critical for the majority of the fishing opportunities throughout Washington – trout and anadromous salmon and steelhead fisheries rely on the presence of hatchery fish in our waterways. Additionally, production of salmon, specifically Chinook, is critical to the recovery of southern resident killer whales. Hatchery conservation programs contribute to protecting and preserving natural runs of salmon and steelhead. Hatchery programs also help us meet co-management plans and court-ordered directives.

The production of hatchery fish also requires facility maintenance of the systems of 81 hatcheries owned or managed by the department.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal will contribute to the following performance indicators:

- Percentage of successfully completed IT supported projects
- Percentage of mission critical business systems supported

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. However, this decision package is focused solely on staff that currently work for WDFW.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Funding for maintenance level decision packages are frequently inwardly focused. This funding request is responding to a new cost increase in a specific area that is required, and the bills must be paid. Without additional funding for these increased/new costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not directly connected to specific communities, however, cutting services and shifting resources will hinder the Department's ability to apply an equitable lens.

Target Populations or Communities:

Funding for maintenance level decision packages are frequently inwardly focused. This funding request is responding to a new cost increase in a specific area that is required, and the bills must be paid. Without additional funding for these increased/new costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not directly connected to specific communities, however, cutting services and shifting resources will hinder the Department's ability to apply an equitable lens.

Providing funding for the wage increase of these positions, because of reclassification, ensures an equitable standard of compensation at WDFW. Information Technology staff provide support to the agency which allows WDFW to uphold their mission for commercial and recreational outdoor activities throughout the state which helps contribute revenue to local businesses and communities.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

N/A

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

N/A

Stakeholder Response:

N/A

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

Reference Documents

[2325 BN - WDFW Reclassified IT Positions.xlsx](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$47	\$49	\$96	\$49	\$49	\$98
Obj. B	\$8	\$9	\$17	\$9	\$9	\$18

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is committed to addressing equity in public spending; however, the Contract and Purchasing Division does not currently have capacity or specialized skill set to comply with recent Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) expectations and recommendations. To address this issue, the Department proposes funding an additional position dedicated to the DEI components of contracts and purchasing. This position will also alleviate the current DEI related workload from existing staff that has been accumulating. Funding a new position with specialized skills in DEI and contracts and purchasing will allow the Department to meet requirements.

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$145	\$145	\$290	\$145	\$145	\$290
Total Expenditures	\$145	\$145	\$290	\$145	\$145	\$290

Decision Package Description

In recent years WDFW has experienced an increase in the reporting requirements for DEI-related metrics in contracting and procurements. These have been incrementally absorbed by contracting staff, however this approach is not sustainable, and has reached a point where additional capacity is needed to properly comply with requirements and recommendations.

Executive Order 22-01 “Equity in Public Contracting” mandates agencies to implement the recommendations 2019 Washington State Disparity Study, which created a Washington State Tool for Equity in Public Spending. Although WDFW is not listed as an executive or cabinet agency, the Department of Enterprise Services (DES) has the authority to establish purchasing policy for all state agencies and universities.

Although WDFW currently has a team dedicated to DEI issues internal and external to the Department, the staff in those teams does not have the capacity or subject matter expertise to address these contracts and purchasing requirements.

The Department proposes funding one additional contract and purchasing staff to specialize in DEI issues, reporting requirements, and best practices. This position will be embedded in the Contract and Purchasing Division of the Department and will have DEI experience and expertise. This position will absorb the additional DEI related reporting requirements that other government contracts are newly mandating. This will make the entire Contract and Purchasing Division more efficient and increase DEI issue awareness throughout the entire Department.

If WDFW does not receive additional staffing, the Department will continue to have inadequate capacity to complete these requirements and initiatives. In the last several years, the Contract and Purchasing Division has accumulated DEI reporting related tasks that have been incrementally absorbed by existing staff, however the applicable workload for DEI related issues has reached a threshold where additional capacity is crucial to take on these duties.

The existing DEI team is not able to contribute any staff to this issue because the team is already committed to other internal and external DEI issues and is not equipped to meet the specifications for contracting and purchasing requirements. The DEI team will be able to contribute and share data and other subject matter expertise if relevant; however, pulling staff from the DEI team to put on the contracting and purchasing workload would severely hinder their progress of increasing DEI throughout the Department, and be a significant shift in their current work duties.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This proposal would not be an addition to the DEI team directly, however the position will be able to collaborate with the established DEI team on applicable issues. This position will be embedded within the Contracts and Purchasing Division to address DEI issues as it relates to mandates and reporting requirements.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries (object A) and benefits (object B) of 1 full time equivalent (FTE) total \$103,000 beginning fiscal year 2024, ongoing. Good and services (object E) total \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year, as well as central agency costs.

An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate (included in object T).

Workforce Assumptions:

1.0 FTE Management Analyst 3

The Management Analyst 3 will work within the Contracts and Purchasing Division of WDFW. Duties include responding to DEI related requirements of contracts and procurements; tracking purchasing card spending, Amazon spending, Direct Buy spending; participating in group trainings provided by DES for diverse businesses and agencies, conduct pre bid conferences, identify areas to unbundle and comply with multi award guidance, report on key performance indicators for DES' strategic plan and corresponding roadmap on a quarterly basis.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the Results Washington Goal: Efficient, Effective, and Accountable Government. It includes meaningful community and customer engagement in fishing and hunting policies and ensures equitable access to information throughout Washington State. It fosters inclusiveness and diversity in Washington's hunting and fishing community by making hunting and fishing regulations available to the public in several formats. This also helps WDFW stay accountable and transparent in managing hunting and fishing resources. And this request will help WDFW build trust with our partners and the public by providing access to hunting and fishing regulations in multiple forms.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This package aligns the WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan in the following strategies:

- Engage communities through recreation and stewardship, promoting and educating the public about fishing and hunting regulations, delivering to hunters and anglers customer service, and providing community awareness and stewardship of agency goals.
- Model operational and environmental excellence, expanding ways for the Department to connect with residents.

In addition, this proposal supports the 25-year near-term action:

- Increase participation in fish and wildlife-related activities, particularly among youth, racially diverse communities, hunters, anglers, and wildlife watchers.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Business Management & Obligations: \$145,000 beginning in fiscal year 2024, ongoing, General Fund-State

The Department's business management works comprehensively to support the entire Department and meets obligations. Department leadership and strategy are fundamental to address the state's environmental concerns while working within the challenging sociopolitical climate that comes along with natural resource work, including diversity, equity, and inclusion. An effective Department requires the administrative infrastructure and staff that successfully supports the needs and performs work directly in service to the mission.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department’s ability to the following performance outcomes:

- Increase decision transparency to both internal and external audiences
- Improve employee satisfaction
- Track workforce diversity, equity, and inclusion measures
- Percentage of DEI expectations and recommendations met

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Communications and Public Engagement divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. This proposal will build the Department’s capacity to address DEI issues within contracts and purchasing operations.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

The purpose of this proposal is to add capacity to the contract and purchasing division to improve best practices involving DEI requirements and reporting. Funding this proposal will allow the Department to dedicate staff with specialized skills to meet reporting requirements and contribute DEI content within contracts and purchasing at the Department.

Target Populations or Communities:

Funding this decision package will allow WDFW to support specific communities such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted groups. The benefits to Minority and Women Owned Businesses are discussed in the State of Washington Disparity Study:

- Reducing the systemic barriers identified.
- Increased bidding by certified firms.
- Increased prime contract awards to certified firms.
- Increased diversity of the types of industries in which M/WBEs receive dollars (i.e., reduced market segregation).
- Increased utilization by individual contract awarding authorities.
- Increased “capacity” of certified firms as measured by bonding limits, size of jobs, profitability, etc.
- Utilization of M/WBEs (to be determined by a future disparity study update).

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

N/A

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

This proposal will benefit other local governments, agencies, and federal partners that require DEI related reporting requirements in grants and contracts.

Stakeholder Response:

N/A

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

[Executive Order 22-01](#) and [22-02](#) implement measures for equity in public spending.

[RCW 39.26.090](#) gives DES the authority to establish policies for all state agency purchasing.

[POL-DES-090-00](#) Delegated Authority Policy (WDFW has been delegated authority by DES for purchasing).

[RCW 39.19](#) includes the prohibited activities and compliance guidance for the Office of Minority and Women-owned Businesses.

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$74	\$74	\$148	\$74	\$74	\$148
Obj. B	\$29	\$29	\$58	\$29	\$29	\$58
Obj. E	\$6	\$6	\$12	\$6	\$6	\$12
Obj. T	\$36	\$36	\$72	\$36	\$36	\$72

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

Climate change, record fisheries participation, and a rapidly growing human population in the Puget Sound region are putting Puget Sound shellfish resources under increasing and unprecedented pressure. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) requests full carry-forward level (CFL) funding and full-time equivalents (FTEs) to provide ongoing support to the Puget Sound Shellfish Program. Ongoing funding and FTEs are necessary to address short and long-term needs, to adapt to evolving management conditions, to continue to meet tribal co-management obligations, and to continue to ensure the healthy shellfish populations the people of Washington expect. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$804	\$600	\$1,404	\$600	\$600	\$1,200
Total Expenditures	\$804	\$600	\$1,404	\$600	\$600	\$1,200

Decision Package Description

WDFW’s Puget Sound Shellfish Program oversees the management of increasingly popular recreational fisheries—including crab, clams and oysters, shrimp, squid, and more. The program also manages lucrative Dungeness crab, shrimp, sea cucumber and urchin, and other commercial fisheries. The program also oversees a disease and pest risk management program that protects these fisheries, as well as the nation’s leading shellfish aquaculture industry, from potentially devastating disease issues. Despite the magnitude of responsibility over Puget Sound’s extraordinary shellfish resources, the program has operated with increasingly problematic limitations for some time.

The Puget Sound Shellfish Program has been impacted by historical economic challenges that have reduced overall capacity. Additionally, pressures on shellfish resources have increased, and the number and diversity of emerging issues has intensified. The Program has specific deficiencies including:

- Inadequate number of available field staff and resources to adequately monitor recreational and commercial shellfish fisheries and populations.
- Inadequate number of available biologist-level staff to manage fisheries and respond to developing issues.
- Outdated data management infrastructure limiting staff capacity.
- Lack of dedicated funding for a shellfish disease control program befitting the state’s status as a leading shellfish producer at the national level.
- Limited ability to address critical science questions and emerging challenges—including climate change-related issues, record fisheries participation, and a rapidly growing human population in the Puget Sound region and Washington state.

To address the above, WDFW requested funding and full-time employees (FTEs) to expand its Puget Sound Shellfish Program in the 2022 legislative session. The enacted 2022 Supplemental Operating Budget provided WDFW with ten full-time equivalent (FTE) staff in fiscal year 2023 and \$1,040 million ongoing. Budget item “RSX” Monitor Shellfish Harvest included the following legislative note: “Ongoing funding is provided for additional monitoring of recreational and commercial shellfish harvests, monitor intertidal and crustacean fisheries, address emerging environmental issues, create a new data management infrastructure, and develop a disease and pest management program to protect shellfish fisheries.”

Problem statement

Funding for Puget Sound Shellfish Program is being reduced by \$1.404 million in 2023-25 carry-forward level. The reduction includes funding for a separate item that was applied to this request in error. Underfunding this program ongoing puts it at risk of failing to complete critical work activities outlined in the 2022 supplemental budget request.

Below – 2023-25 carry-forward level for budget item RSX (in thousands)

Item	Item Title	Fund	FY24	FY25	Notes
RSX	Monitor Shellfish Harvest	001-1	1,040	1,040	Underfunded by \$1,404 million of fund 001-1.
RSX	Monitor Shellfish Harvest	104-1	295	295	This \$295k of fund 104 applied in error. It should be associated with a separate shellfish monitoring request (decision package item "RS").

Below – difference in funding (CFL = carry-forward level) (in thousands)

WDFW Budget Request	Category	FY 2024 CFL	FY 2025 CFL	Total
RSX - Monitor Shellfish Harvest Funding	Funds Requested by WDFW	1,844	1,640	3,484
	Funding to be received via Carry-forward level (CFL)	1,040	1,040	2,080
	Difference (amount being requested):	804	600	1,404

For backup documentation, refer to the following attachments:

- Attachment A – original budget request “RSX – Monitor Shellfish Harvest”
- Attachment B – CFL workbook provided by OFM

WDFW is seeking the difference between the ongoing amount in “RSX Monitor Shellfish Harvest” compared to the funding provided in carry-forward level. This will allow the Department to fully address the immediate and long-term needs of the Puget Sound Shellfish Program described above, the Department proposes to hire a range of field, management, and data support staff. This will allow the Puget Sound shellfish program to update and expand our work in several key areas including:

- Monitoring recreational and commercial fisheries
- Emerging Intertidal and crustacean fisheries management issues
- Data management infrastructure and staff capacity
- Shellfish Pest and Disease Control
- Science support

One alternative is to do nothing (status quo). This option was not chosen since the Puget Sound shellfish program will not be able address the wide-ranging needs described above. Negative impacts include:

- Management will be significantly hampered by an absence of adequate data management infrastructure and staff will waste valuable time on inefficient data collection, organization, and analysis processes.
- Inability to keep up with the demands of a growing constituency and population.
- Inadequate capacity to meet co-management obligations.
- Challenges in adequately understanding and responding to emerging issues.
- Increase in conservative management decisions (which may come with costs to harvesters and other constituents) due to outdated or insufficient data.
- Inadequate capacity to respond to a pest/disease introduction and outbreak.
- Long-term challenges related to adequately supporting staff teams and retaining talented staff.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

N/A

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

The amount of this request was calculated by subtracting the difference between the amount of the original request minus the amounts listed in the CFL workbook provided by OFM.

Calculations:

Funding:

- \$3.484 million (amount of original request) - \$2.08 million (amount listed in CFL workbook) = \$1.404 million (amount of this request).

FTEs:

- 11.3 FTEs (FTEs in original request) – 10.0 (FTEs listed in CFL workbook) = 1.3 (FTEs requested in this decision package).

Workforce Assumptions:

The reduction in CFL did not specify the job classification of FTEs being reduced. The compensation (salaries and benefits) portion of this request is part of the difference between what was requested versus the FTEs listed in the CFL document.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve two Results Washington goals: 1) Prosperous Economy; and 2) Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment. Active monitoring and reliable crabbing data are critical to manage and support recreational and commercial opportunities in Puget Sound while balancing conservation needs and meeting tribal co-management obligations. In addition, recreational shellfishing brings economic activity to the communities where it occurs, often rural communities.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

Increase monitoring in recreational shellfisheries advances the WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan's following actions and strategies:

Proactively address conservation challenges by supporting the quality and quantity of sustainable harvest opportunities.

Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions by developing a data management system for decision-making, outreach, and ensuring our science supports adaptive management to address conservation challenges proactively.

In addition, this decision package improves the 25-year Performance goal:

90% of the public reports trusting WDFW to do what is right for the fish and wildlife management in our state.

25% increase in participation in fish and wildlife-related activities, particularly among youth, racially diverse communities, hunters, anglers, and watchable wildlife enthusiasts.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Manage Fishing Opportunities, 1.3 FTEs and \$1.404 million in the 2023-25 biennium, General Fund State.

To provide fishing opportunities, this effort provides additional monitoring and improved management of shellfish populations. Shellfish resources are assessed and monitored to ensure harvest and resource management actions are sustainable and based on sound science. To understand what fishery resources are available, department staff conduct shellfish population surveys. To maximize recreational and commercial opportunities and minimize risks to the viability of wild populations, the department develops and uses shellfish management harvest models that consider the spatial and temporal variability of shellfish abundance and harvest. The department cooperatively manages shellfish fisheries with treaty tribes, implementing laws and court orders. These state-tribal shellfish harvest management plans ensure that fisheries are conducted to meet sustainability and conservation goals.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Indicators:

- Priority research needs being met
- Shellfish beaches sampled
- Value of commercial fishing in Washington State
- Number of angler days
- Compliance rate of Fish and Wildlife Police Officer contacts

While the primary focus of this decision package is on recreational fisheries, improved monitoring of recreational fisheries will also positively impact Puget Sound commercial fisheries. For example, currently outdated data is used to estimate the quantity of unreported catch that occurs in the PS recreational crab fishery. With contemporary data, WDFW can update these model calculations which will directly result in more crab available to the commercial crab fishing fleet to harvest—harvest that occurs only on quota remaining, following the completion of recreational seasons. Improved data collection will also reduce error in estimates of clam and oyster harvest and accurately account for changes to both clam and oyster population demographics and in recreational harvest patterns—which will enable more precise season-setting. More precise season-setting is expected to allow for managers to optimize harvest opportunity. Improved data collection ability will also provide value in ability to forecast emerging management challenges, and expand WDFW's engagement with harvesters, which is expected to improve understanding of and compliance with regulations.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Funding for maintenance level decision packages is frequently inwardly focused. This funding request is responding to cost increases that support core agency functions. These reductions are not directly connected to specific communities, however cutting services, and shifting resources will hinder the Department's ability to apply an equitable lens.

Target Populations or Communities:

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support specific communities such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted groups. The Department is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems to be sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities and many others are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 25 Economic Benefits by ensuring WDFW's Puget Sound Shellfish program capacity to support natural resource-based industries by increasing ability to monitor recreational and commercial shellfish harvests, monitor intertidal and crustacean fisheries, address emerging environmental issues, build data management infrastructure, and develop a disease and pest management program to protect shellfish fisheries. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #96) Conduct and coordinate research to improve the understanding of ecosystem-industry interactions, opportunities, and benefits, by increasing WDFW's staff capacity to monitor, research, and provide science-based analysis related to management of shellfish and crustacean fisheries. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #164) Support natural resource sector jobs and production opportunities by increasing WDFW's staff capacity to support natural resource jobs in commercial and recreational fisheries through increased management and safety

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods by increasing WDFW's staff capacity to increasing access to safe and more abundant local food harvests, such as fish and shellfish, through increased management and monitoring capacity in addition to specific disease and pest response in the shellfish industry. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts by increasing WDFW's capacity to monitor, support, and manage commercial and recreational shellfish and crustacean fisheries.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 14 Invasive Species and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #46) Prevent and rapidly respond to the introduction and spread of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species, including green crab, predatory fish, and invasive plants, by increasing WDFW's staff capacity to monitor and respond to emerging diseases and pests in the commercial and recreational shellfish industries.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by maintaining WDFW's ability to manage commercial and recreational shellfish and crustacean harvests.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

The Puget Sound treaty tribes have consistently communicated to WDFW shellfish managers that expanded monitoring of recreational fisheries is needed. For example, because the tribes did not believe WDFW had sufficient resources to adequately monitor state finfish and shellfish fisheries, in 2021 the tribes requested to meet directly with WDFW and the Governor's office to express their concerns and to request support for future WDFW budgets that include expanded fisheries monitoring. The Department anticipates the tribes will support the proposed new work to expand monitoring of crab and intertidal fisheries, which will be beneficial to the co-management relationship.

Stakeholder Response:

WDFW anticipates support from stakeholders, which include tribes, commercial fisheries, and the general public.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

Reference Documents

[Attachment A – original budget request.docx](#)

[Attachment B – CFL workbook provided by OFM.xlsx](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$69	\$69	\$138	\$69	\$69	\$138
Obj. B	\$32	\$32	\$64	\$32	\$32	\$64
Obj. E	\$111	\$125	\$236	\$125	\$125	\$250
Obj. G	\$292	\$112	\$404	\$112	\$112	\$224
Obj. J	\$98	\$111	\$209	\$111	\$111	\$222
Obj. T	\$202	\$151	\$353	\$151	\$151	\$302

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Agency Recommendation Summary

Salmon management requires extensive data and analysis to understand fisheries impacts and maintain fishing opportunities. Tribal co-management, coupled with ensuring salmon fisheries are compliant with Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Pacific Salmon Treaty requirements, requires a broad understanding of salmon science, policy, tribal law, and how they intersect. This proposal adds strategically focused staff that enhance Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) ability to add higher-level quantitative analysis and scientific rigor that supports salmon conservation. These key staff will also support both internal collaboration with cross-program science and policy, as well as external communication with stakeholders. These positions also support the public's understanding of policy and management decisions, which leads to improved outcomes. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$517	\$517	\$1,034	\$517	\$517	\$1,034
Total Expenditures	\$517	\$517	\$1,034	\$517	\$517	\$1,034

Decision Package Description

The need for information to evaluate fisheries and associated impacts has increased exponentially since the 1999 listing of Puget Sound Chinook salmon under the ESA, the implementation of mass marking and coded wire tagging programs, and the shift to mark-selective fishing opportunities. In previous biennia, the Legislature has identified this need and continues to fund robust sampling and monitoring programs to collect valuable information in marine area salmon fisheries.

While much of the attention and focus has been on Chinook salmon – a major part of the endangered Southern Resident killer whale diet – all the salmon and steelhead populations on the Washington Coast and Puget Sound are linked, both in the habitats they use and in the management actions taken. Decisions made for a singular species or population often have effects on other species and populations. For example, a fishery directed at hatchery-origin salmon or steelhead could have impacts to ESA-listed species incidentally caught and released during that fishery. An angler fishing for hatchery-origin salmon in the Snohomish River could inadvertently catch, but be required to release, an ESA-listed wild steelhead. Some of the steelhead released will subsequently die. If not managed effectively, the fisheries could slow or prevent the recovery of ESA-listed salmon and steelhead. Modern management requires a multi-species approach, including counting hatchery and natural-origin populations.

Contemporary salmon and steelhead management also accounts for other mitigating factors when considering actions for conservation and harvest opportunity. This includes increases in pinniped populations in Puget Sound and the Washington Coast, dietary needs of Southern Resident Killer Whale populations, and how a changing and uncertain climate affects salmon productivity in marine and freshwater environments. Any salmon management action that states, Tribal co-managers, or federal partners take is under increasing scrutiny. As that scrutiny increases and populations continue to decline, the need for scientific rigor and scientifically defensible decision-making will be key to maintaining fishing opportunities. This package helps address those needs.

The need for information and analysis grows along with the need for increased broad collaboration with numerous entities. This package will lead to improved intra-agency collaboration between fisheries management, science staff, and habitat scientists around life cycle and watershed monitoring. These proposed staff will contribute to improved communication among the 23 U.S. v. Washington treaty tribes and their science and management staff, as well as federal partners. This proposal adds a Fish and Wildlife Biologist, an IT-App Developer/Modeler, and a WMS position overseeing anadromous fisheries policy on the Washington Coast.

Retirements and Reorganization Efforts

In recent years, there has been a greater need for timely responses to a changing salmon management environment. Recent retirements have left fewer staff with the required broad understanding that is needed to be effective and responsive to these complexities. Current staffing levels are inadequate to meet all the current and future demands for analysis and policy level decision making. This proposal, coupled with additional organizational changes, addresses current deficiencies in experience, and allows for flexibility in trying to anticipate future needs. It creates

opportunities for the salmon and steelhead policy staff to have increased communication and collaboration with the Director's policy team. This also allows for increased opportunities for staff to increase collaboration with Tribal co-manager policy representatives. All these pieces are essential to meet our ESA obligations, our obligations to tribal co-managers under US v. WA, and to inform our decision-making for conservation and harvest opportunities.

Responding to Current Opportunities

Each of these positions is a strategic addition that is coupled with planned organizational changes within the Intergovernmental Salmon Management Team. The current team includes a broad array of scientists, biologists, and managers who work closely with our science division and regional biologists and program managers to ensure coordination and consistency in implementing salmon and steelhead policies. This team is involved in numerous domestic and international fishery forums including the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) and various committees and panels associated with the Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST) between the U.S. and Canada.

The Fish and Wildlife Biologist position is envisioned to focus on lower-level data compilation and analysis associated with salmon and steelhead. The primary focus will be supporting coho, chum, pink, and sockeye populations, while also providing support and capacity for other anadromous species needs within the team. This position is intended to work collaboratively with the current lead scientist associated with these species on the team.

The IT App Development-Journey (Scientist/Modeler) is a position that would join our team associated with the management model used for Chinook and coho fisheries in the ocean and Puget Sound known as the Fishery Regulation Assessment Model (FRAM). PFMC, WDFW, and the Tribal co-managers use this model to predict fisheries impacts on Chinook and coho stocks and set salmon seasons to stay within ESA limitations. WDFW staff play a key role in collaboration with Tribal co-managers and federal partners in the use and development of this tool. In recent years, this team has been instrumental in performing other analysis for Southern Resident killer whales, population modeling, and collaborating within the statewide team. This position specifically provides more flexibility within the existing team to support emerging needs as new team members grow and contribute to other ongoing work.

The Coastal Policy management position is necessary to support ongoing needs related to anadromous fisheries along the Washington Coast, Willapa Bay, Grays Harbor, and the freshwater systems along the outer coast. Current capacity is inadequate to meet all the demands related to coastal salmon and steelhead management and policy. This position is intended to provide the necessary oversight to contribute to the broader salmon and steelhead policy team and ensure consistency in communication and implementation. This position also contributes to Tribal co-manager policy interactions related to salmon and steelhead fisheries, which has increased in recent years.

This proposal is strategic because it attempts to couple planned organizational changes with increases to current capacity. Due to the unique nature of the work, no other agency is doing this work. There is some limited re-deployment of the base budget with this planned reorganization.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

N/A

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and benefits (Objects A and B) for 3 FTE positions total \$369,000 beginning in fiscal year 2024, ongoing. Goods and services, object E, include \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year, which total \$18,000 beginning in fiscal year 2024, ongoing. Finally, an infrastructure and program support rate of 33.5% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

This proposal adds a Fish and Wildlife Biologist, an IT App Developer/Modeler, and a WMS position overseeing anadromous fisheries policy on the Washington Coast.

Job classification and the associated work are as follows:

1.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 3, functions as a data compiler for coho, chum, pink, and sockeye salmon under the direction of the senior scientist associated with those species.

1.0 FTE IT App Development-Journey, functions as a FRAM (Fishery Regulation Assessment Model) modeler/developer within the Intergovernmental Salmon Management Team. Responsible for enhancing and building predictive modeling and analysis capacity.

1.0 FTE Washington Management Service 2, acts as the lead with the responsibility to oversee coastal salmon policy.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve the Results Washington goal of a Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment. This proposal is fundamental to the staffing needs around harvest management and recovery of ESA-listed Salmon and Steelhead in Puget Sound and the Washington Coast. In addition, informed decision-making is critical to managing recreational, commercial, and tribal fisheries while protecting native salmonid runs and other economically and culturally important species.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This decision package directly supports the Department's 25-Year Strategic Plan strategy of Proactively Address Conservation Challenges in the near term by:

- Vastly expand current efforts to manage and recover at-risk fish and wildlife species.
- Develop and implement a WDFW Climate Resilience Plan.
- In the long term, working with other natural resource agencies, tribes, nongovernmental organizations, collaborative partners, stakeholders, and businesses to leverage their expertise and secure new and stable fund sources to further enhance conservation work and outcomes in Washington.

In addition, this proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following performance outcomes:

- 90% of the public reports trusting WDFW to do what is right for the fish and wildlife management in our state.
- 25% increase in wild salmon populations

WDFW Activity Inventory

Manage Fishing Opportunities: 3.0 FTE and \$517,000 in FY 2024 and ongoing - State General Fund.

The Department cooperatively manages fisheries with treaty tribes and neighboring states and countries, implementing laws, court orders, and international agreements. These plans ensure that fisheries are conducted to meet federal ESA requirements and conservation goals. In addition, WDFW assessed, monitored, and evaluated finfish populations to ensure harvest and resource management actions are sustainable and based on sound science. The Department staff conduct field investigations to count the number of juveniles migrating to saltwater and adults returning to freshwater, conducts tests fisheries to verify abundance assumptions, and uses fish management harvest models to maximize recreational and commercial opportunities while minimizing risks to wild fish populations.

Performance Outcomes:

Positive outcomes include more informed decision making, bench building, increased communication, internally as well as with partners and co-managers.

Negative outcomes that are avoided, eliminated, reduced, or mitigated include reduced staff capacity to address issues, negative communication with co-managers, fewer fishing opportunities, and more conservative management with less information.

- Numerous factors are related to increasing terms and conditions.

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Indicators:

- Priority research needs being met
- Fisheries in compliance with harvest protection goals
- Mark Selective Fisheries
- Hatchery programs in compliance with ESA
- Salmon hatchery recommendations

Expected outcomes from increased monitoring are renewed or increased recreational fishing opportunities in the systems that we monitor, and a better understanding of fishery impacts on protected resources and hatchery production. The proposal maximizes existing facilities and information technology structures within the agency to reduce the overall costs of implementing a monitoring program.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. In addition, this proposal is critical to maintaining key activities to comply with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST). Therefore, support for this request ensures there are no degradation services to the communities we serve.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

This funding request is responding to a new cost in the salmon team that is required. Without additional funding for these new costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. Cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equitable lens as the Department is forced to shift resources. Key salmon team staff will notably support internal collaboration with cross-program science and policy and external communication with stakeholders. These positions also support the public's understanding of policy and management decisions, which leads to improved outcomes.

Target Populations or Communities:

This proposal impacts equity in Washington by ensuring tribal communities can access their fair share of available salmon and steelhead resources, and freshwater river fisheries are available. Specifically, oversight of coastal salmon and steelhead fisheries impacts rural communities that rely on fishing tourism. In addition, it ensures we cooperatively manage our salmon and steelhead resources with coastal tribal co-managers to guarantee resources are available for their communities.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery by increasing WDFW's capacity to support salmon recovery through data-driven management decisions for salmonid populations and increasing capacity to coordinate across key management partners in the state including tribes. This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID#206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by ensuring capacity to support informed decision making related to salmon recovery and harvest with a focus on management models and analyses related to chinook, coho, and other salmonids. This decision packages fulfills the secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by ensuring WDFW program capacity to support salmon recovery through modeling and analysis of salmon populations that inform best management practices.

This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 35 Conduct research, science, and monitoring to inform decision-making, adaptive management and implementation of actions to recover Southern Residents by ensuring capacity to support informed decision making related to salmon recovery and harvest with a focus on management models and analyses related to chinook, coho, and other salmonids, that will inform management of Southern Residents. Through these efforts, this decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon strategy number eight: Strengthen science, monitoring and accountability.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

The proposed positions relate directly to expanding WDFW capacity for communication and collaboration with tribal co-managers. This will benefit both parties and strengthens current agency efforts to collaborate with our partner tribes. This also helps staff capacity in supporting the Director and his policy team as it relates to building co-manager relationships.

Stakeholder Response:

There are no direct negative impacts to non-governmental stakeholders. The intent of the proposal is to build capacity within the existing team to continue and expand stakeholder outreach. Helping stakeholders understand the complexity of factors and reasons for decision making helps to build credibility and public understanding.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$274	\$274	\$548	\$274	\$274	\$548
Obj. B	\$95	\$95	\$190	\$95	\$95	\$190
Obj. E	\$18	\$18	\$36	\$18	\$18	\$36
Obj. T	\$130	\$130	\$260	\$130	\$130	\$260

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Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is required by state law to clip the adipose fin of millions of juvenile hatchery Chinook and coho salmon intended for harvest, a process known as mass-marking. This proposal requests funding for the critical staff hired through a private temporary labor firm to conduct yearly mass-marking activities. Without additional funding to support these cost increases, the ability to release hatchery salmon that support Washington's fish populations, endangered Southern Resident killer whales, and the economy will decline. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation].

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$774	\$774	\$1,548	\$774	\$774	\$1,548
Total Expenditures	\$774	\$774	\$1,548	\$774	\$774	\$1,548

Decision Package Description

Chinook and Coho Salmon - External Marking of Hatchery-Produced Fish - Program (RCW 77.95.290)

Washington has one of the largest systems of salmon hatcheries in the world, raising more than 200 million juvenile fish at state, federal, and tribal facilities each year. These hatcheries produce most of the salmon caught in Washington waters, contributing significantly to the statewide economy. In addition, these fish provide commercial, tribal, and recreational fishing opportunities while protecting wild Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed populations.

Mass-marking has played a vital role in salmon management since the mid-1990s when WDFW launched a pioneering effort to visibly mark hatchery-raised salmon so they could be readily distinguished from wild fish in Northwest waters. In addition, mass-marking supports a growing number of "mark-selective fisheries" which require anglers to release unmarked salmon or steelhead. These rules protect wild salmon while permitting anglers to retain hatchery-produced fish for harvest. Mass-marking has also helped increase the accuracy of population assessments of wild salmon through sampling and catch-record card data.

Mass-marking temporary labor

Since 2016, the demanding hours to accomplish mass-marking activities have increased by 6.5% (See Table 1). Labor staff positions and contracted hours correspond to retention and recruitment to meet the Department's mass-marking objectives. Today, WDFW utilizes a fleet of 27 mass-marking trailers, each staffed with 12 to 14 contracted labor staff, to mass-mark over 100 million juvenile Coho, Chinook salmon, and steelhead trout.

In fiscal year 2022, The Department spent \$2.9 million on 117,991 labor hours for this effort. This strategy has revolutionized salmon management and provided an indispensable tool in the broad-based effort to recover wild salmon stocks throughout the region while maintaining the salmon fishing economy and recreational opportunities.

Position	Hours	Hours
	FY2016	FY2022
Fish ID Technician	94,774	18,024
Assistant Lead	3,732	77,373
Lead	12,252	22,594
Total Hours	110,758	117,991

Table 1. Mass-marking temporary labor hours increase by fiscal year.

The Washington State minimum wage increase, and personnel retention goals will make mass-marking fish prohibitively expensive for WDFW. In addition, in recent years, WDFW has already had difficulty finding adequate staffing to perform this critical work. Before mass-marking,

ESA-imposed restrictions threatened to close historic salmon fisheries throughout the region. In addition to the recreational and cultural values involved, the potential loss of fishing opportunities presented a severe economic threat to fishing families and entire communities, especially in rural areas of the Northwest. Funding this request would prevent impacts on local economies and food security statewide by ensuring that mass-marking can continue at needed levels.

Funding Alternatives

Several alternatives to mitigate this have been considered, including producing less fish that require mass-marking, which could violate state law (RCW 77.95.290). In addition, commercial and recreational fishing opportunities would be reduced, impacting Washington's economy. Hatchery brood-stocks would also be compromised and WDFW's ability to assess the health and status of wild salmon stocks would be greatly reduced.

Another option is for WDFW to invest in Auto-Fish marking systems to mass-mark hatchery-produced salmon and steelhead more efficiently using improved technology. This requires a large investment up front, and the system takes approximately two years to build and receive, so savings would not be noticed immediately. WDFW has requested additional funding to bolster its auto-marking efforts, reducing reliance on manual marking. Another alternative is to redirect other funding to the mass-marking program, but this would compromise WDFW's other hunting and fishing activities.

This funding request has been determined to be the least expensive alternative for continued mass-marking of WDFW's hatchery production of chinook, coho, and steelhead, without a corresponding reduction in production.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

WDFW is requesting additional funding for labor costs, driven by the minimum wage increases and lack of personnel retention goals. It does not expand or alter the current mass-marking program.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Goods and services, Object E, total \$773,850 for fiscal year 2024 and ongoing for the mass-marking contracted labor costs. The wage rate adjustment is due to the lack of retention and recruitment to meet mass-marking objectives for the Department. In addition, under I-1433, L&I will calculate the adjusted minimum wage rate based on the U.S. Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for the twelve months prior to each September 1. Through trial, WDFW has determined that the data from CPI-W Series Id: WUR0000SA0 was used in calculating the 2023 minimum wage, which is available on the U.S. BLS website (<https://data.bls.gov/>). Please see the expanded details in the “Hourly Wage” under the “Workforce Assumptions” section below.

See WDFW Mass-Marking Wage Adjustments RefDoc attachment for details.

New Annual Base Funding Level: The fiscal year 2016 mass-marking expenses (\$1,421,362) were used as the annual base funding level prior to the increases in the minimum wage from I-1433. This was the last full year prior to the increases in the minimum wage. The 2018 Supplemental budget line item “4B” Mass Marking – Minimum Wage Costs plus the carryforward level adjustment per year (\$473,000) was added, increasing the annual base to \$1,894,362 for the 2019-21 biennium. 2019-21 biennium budget line item “11” Mass-Marking Minimum Wage plus carryforward level adjustment per year (\$236,000) was added to the annual base for the 2019-21 biennium, increasing the annual base to \$2,130,362. Then, the 2019-21 biennium budget line item “11” Mass-Marking Minimum Wage adjustment per year (\$1,000) and the 2022 Supplemental budget (\$220,000) was added to the new annual base of \$2,351,362 used for the 2023-25 biennium budget request.

Base Average Hours: The updated base hours correspond to the hours worked by marking staff in fiscal year 2022 to meet the Department’s mass-marking objectives.

Hourly Wages: The mass-marking positions are paid based on the annual minimum wage increases. The calendar year (CY) 2022 minimum wage (\$14.49) was published by L&I on September 30, 2021, taking effect January 1, 2022, and can be found on their website (<https://ini.wa.gov/workers-rights/wages/minimum-wage/>). Consistent with the previously reported hourly wages for CY 2022 by the private temporary labor firm, the CY 2022 wages of the Assistant Lead and Lead positions are 15% and 37%, respectively, higher than the Fish ID Technician position. Therefore, CY 2023 premiums are estimated wages (January through June) for the Assistant Lead and Lead positions, which are held constant through the remaining periods.

The CY 2023 minimum wage, highlighted in green on the attached WDFW Mass-Marking Wage Adjustments RefDoc, has been updated with L&I’s published new minimum wage on June 30, 2022. The wages of Assistant Lead and Lead, administrative overhead cost, estimated total costs, and the increase from base will automatically update. The new increase from the base can be compared to the requested contracted labor cost amount.

Administrative Overhead: Adding to the wage cost of the contracted staff, the private temporary labor firm charges a 40% administrative overhead of the staff wages per hour.

Seasonal Spending Trend: To translate the wage increase that takes effect in the middle of a fiscal year, the calculation of the estimated total cost for a fiscal year was split into the period before the wage increase and after. Due to the seasonality of the mass-marking work being done in spring and early summer, the split was based on the average expenditures from fiscal years 2016 and 2017. WDFW estimates 20% of the mass-marking hours occurring from July through December and 80% from January through June.

Wage Increase Impact: The fiscal year estimated total cost is reduced by the annual new base (see New Annual Base Funding Level above for details) to calculate the contracted labor cost driven by the wage increase per fiscal year. The increase from the base for fiscal year 2023 is \$717,652 and \$773,850 for fiscal year 2024.

Workforce Assumptions:

N/A

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve the Results Washington goal of a Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment. The hatchery production of Coho and Chinook salmon is critical to preserve and protect threatened and endangered species, like the Southern Resident orcas (Executive Order 18-02) and perpetuating wildlife in the state. Furthermore, hatchery production is essential to manage and support recreational and commercial fishing opportunities while balancing conservation needs and meeting tribal co-management obligations.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This request supports two strategies: 1) proactively address conservation challenges, and 2) engage communities through recreation and stewardship. This request also contributes to the following performance goals:

90% of the public reports trusting WDFW to do what is right for the fish and wildlife management in our state.

- 25% increase in wild salmon populations.
- 80% of species of greatest conservation need have been surveyed and incorporated into strategies and plans that ensure their conservation.
- 25% increase in participation in fish and wildlife-related activities, particularly among youth, racially diverse communities, hunters, anglers, and watchable wildlife enthusiasts.
- 90% of employees report that they would recommend WDFW as a great place to work.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Produce Hatchery Fish -\$774,000 beginning in fiscal year 2024, ongoing, General Fund-State.

Since it created the program in 1998, the Legislature funded state hatcheries' mass-marking with General Fund-State to provide recreational and commercial fishing opportunities. The mass-marking contributes to the following activities:

- Produce salmon and steelhead.
- Enforce recreational fishing opportunities and regulations.
- Monitor and manage finfish populations.

Hatchery mass-marking benefits commercial and recreational fisheries and fulfills obligations to maintain tribal usual and accustomed fishing rights in salmon and steelhead. In addition, mass-marking is critical to enforce rules and regulations in fishing activities regarding the methods, times, places, and manner of fish harvested. Therefore, mass-marking is crucial for the Department's activities in the fish production cycle, enforcing fishing regulations, monitoring, and managing fish populations.

Performance Outcomes:

The outcomes of this request will help WDFW to continue to produce hatchery fish and directly maintain our performance metrics:

- Mass-marked, hatchery-produced Chinook salmon.
- Mass-marked, hatchery-produced coho salmon.

Continuing support at its current performance level will also help maintain other related performance metrics:

- Fisheries in compliance with harvest protection goals.
- Hatchery programs in compliance with ESA.
- Mark-selective fisheries.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain mass-marking functions to ensure there is not degradation services to the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying labor hours and minimum wage increase that will have a negative impact on the Departments business operations and restrict the mission critical work.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Without additional funding for these increased costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not easily connected to specific communities, however cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equitable lens as the Department is forced to shift resources.

Target Populations or Communities:

This package supports commercial and recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state contributing to a significant amount of revenue to diverse communities of Washington state. Rural and geographically isolated communities in Washington will benefit from the economic opportunities provided by this package. This package also provides economic benefits for Washington residents who rely on seasonal mass-marking positions as part of their income and commercial fishing and related industries that rely on access to hatchery fish as part of their income. Without funding for this package, seasonal job offerings will be cut back, limiting economic opportunities for both parties.

Additionally, this package allows Washington's hatcheries to support local economies (tourism, lodging, restaurants, wholesalers and retailers of recreational equipment, boats, and licenses), provide family recreational opportunities for all Washington residents, and protect Washington's fishing cultural heritage. This cultural heritage is significant especially for tribal and rural communities in the state.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery by ensuring WDFWs continued hatchery production of Chinook and coho salmon and associated mass marking of hatchery fish that informs adaptive management, environmental health, and mark-selective fisheries. This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID# 205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity Work to reduce risk to wild populations by balancing the potential risks and benefits of hatchery production, and by conducting research on hatchery infrastructure and management to reduce the fitness differential between hatchery and wild populations by ensuring adequate WDFW hatchery staffing capacity to maintain hatchery production and support a mark-selective fishery of coho and chinook salmon. Through these efforts this decision packages fulfills the Secondary Criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, by ensuring that staffing capacity for WDFW salmon hatcheries is maintained to maximize salmon production in the face of increased labor costs. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower with salmon recovery by continued hatchery production of Chinook and coho salmon and associated mass marking of hatchery fish that informs adaptive management, environmental health, and mark-selective fisheries.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

If this request is not funded, hatchery production will need to be reduced to levels that can be marked with existing funds, reducing the number of fish available to harvest for all fisheries, including tribal. Recreational fishing opportunities generate revenue for WDFW through license sales. Most of the salmon production at WDFW-owned hatcheries is linked to federal court orders with treaty tribes.

Stakeholder Response:

The Department anticipates support from recreational, commercial, and tribal anglers. Salmon and steelhead fishing contribute a significant amount to the economy and culture of Washington.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

This budget request is an effort to align the contracted labor cost with the state's minimum wage requirements under RCW 49.46.020. Additionally, RCW 77.95.290 requires WDFW to mass-mark all juvenile hatchery Chinook and coho intended for harvest.

Reference Documents

[WDFW Mass-Marking Wage Adjustments RefDoc.pdf](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. E	\$774	\$774	\$1,548	\$774	\$774	\$1,548

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (WDFW) wildlife rehabilitation program is nationally respected, but Washington does not have enough wildlife rehabilitation capacity to address the public’s desire to help wildlife or provide for wildlife needs. The Department previously requested additional expenditure authority in Fund 14A – “Wildlife Rehabilitation Account.” This was a one-time funding request for fiscal years 2021-2025. However, the Department only received one-time funding for the 2021-23 biennium. Given the available fund balance, this request is to increase expenditure authority in the 2023-25 biennium to complete the initial proposal as intended. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 14A - 1	\$150	\$150	\$300	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Expenditures	\$150	\$150	\$300	\$0	\$0	\$0

Decision Package Description

As the human population in Washington grows, the potential for human-caused injury to wildlife and encounters with sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife increases. Human-induced suffering and injuries (motor vehicle collisions, window strike, sticky fly traps, poisonings, and gun shots) are motivating factors that drive people to bring wildlife into rehabilitation facilities (or rescue and “treat” it themselves) and are a primary impetus for people wanting to help wildlife for which they see themselves as responsible.

State law mandates the Department to establish a wildlife rehabilitation program to support the crucial role licensed wildlife rehabilitators play in protecting the public and caring for sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife (RCW 77.12.467), and makes it illegal to engage in wildlife rehabilitation without a permit (RCW 77.15.800; WAC 220-450-070). Yet because of the difficulty of fulfilling the requirements to get a wildlife rehabilitation permit, those who are interested are unable to meet these obligations. Most permitted wildlife rehabilitators are 501c3 organizations ranging in size from small in-home care facilities to large, stand-alone centers with multiple employees.

WDFW Regional Offices and Headquarters customer service staff field many phone calls regarding sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife. WDFW Eastern, North Central, South Central, and Southwest Regional offices have nowhere to refer people, and face public anger and frustration. Based on reports to wildlife rehabilitators, WDFW customer service, and social media, the Department is aware of unpermitted and unskilled people illegally holding animals. These animals suffer injuries, malnutrition, debilitation, are kept in cages, traumatized as “pets,” and the public is put in the position of violating state rules and laws.

Each of Washington’s permitted facilities must associate by written agreement with a licensed and practicing veterinarian as required by Washington State rule. Veterinarians need education on wildlife rehabilitation to treat wild animals properly. They also must be comfortable agreeing to function as a Principal Veterinarian (PV) for those individuals interested in becoming wildlife rehabilitators. Unfortunately, veterinarians are reluctant to become PVs because they lack knowledge.

Services provided by wildlife rehabilitators are exceptionally valuable to wildlife, the public, and the Department, especially to WDFW biologists and Enforcement Officers. The Washington State Legislature recognized the value of wildlife rehabilitation with this statement: *“The legislature finds that licensed wildlife rehabilitators often work closely with local law enforcement, animal control officers, wildlife enforcement officers, and wildlife biologists at the state and federal levels to aid in the safe capture, testing for disease, medical treatment, rehabilitation, and release of wildlife. The state recognizes the critical role licensed wildlife rehabilitators play in capturing and caring for the sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife of Washington state.”* (RCW 77.12.467). WDFW customer service staff, biologists, and Enforcement Officers are frequently called by the public reporting injured and orphaned wildlife and want the Department to care for these animals. The Department cannot accommodate the public or aid wildlife without wildlife rehabilitators.

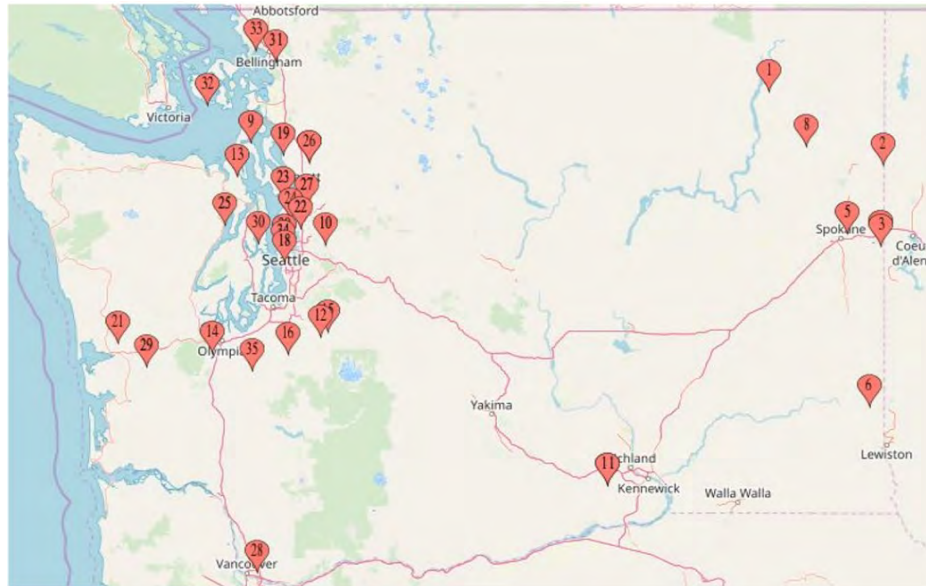


Figure 1. Statewide distribution of Wildlife Rehabilitation facilities.

Wildlife rehabilitation is more than just releasing rehabilitated wildlife:

Primary services include:

1. Accepting sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife from the public and the Department
2. Wild release of physically and psychologically fit healthy animals
3. Providing euthanasia for suffering animals
4. Public education on
 - Humanely managing nuisance wildlife (wildlife rehabilitators are not permitted to trap and remove healthy nuisance animals)
 - When NOT to rescue wildlife
 - Human impacts on wildlife
 - Coexisting with wildlife
5. Assisting the Department with wildlife pick-up and handling

Other services include:

1. Disease monitoring and reporting including:
 - Epizootic diseases affecting Washington wildlife populations
 - Zoonotic diseases affecting humans
2. Threatened and Endangered species rescue
3. Wildlife advocacy
4. Research data and peer reviewed publications, for example:
 - Marine mammal research projects
 - Contributions to Journal of Zoo and Wildlife Medicine
 - Contributions to Journal of Wildlife Rehabilitation
5. Self-regulation and enforcement

There is not enough wildlife rehabilitation capacity in Washington to serve the public need. Current wildlife rehabilitators can barely keep up with expenses and growing demand and are unable to obtain the necessary training and funding to expand their facilities. Interested candidates wanting a wildlife rehabilitation permit are unable to gain the required 1,000 hours of training and experience because existing facilities are strapped for time and resources. Wildlife Rehabilitation is a highly specialized field funded by the permittee's personal accounts, donations, and fundraisers.

This proposal was funded in the previous biennium. WDFW has enough funds that have accumulated in account 14A-Wildlife Rehabilitation Account to cover an additional biennium. The Department wishes to continue serving Washington state in the same capacity as what was proposed in our 2021-23 decision package.

The Department proposes additional expenditure authority in the “Wildlife Rehabilitation Account.” This dedicated fund source is generated from personalized license plate sales. To complete the original proposal as intended, the Department will use the increased expenditure authority to focus on pass-through support toward these three areas:

1. Increase wildlife rehabilitation capacity by adding at least one permitted wildlife rehabilitation facility per WDFW Region by 2025, with emphasis on the underserved Regions, through training and incentives for new wildlife rehabilitators.
 - Start-up grants for new rehabilitators and new facilities.
 - Hands-on training workshops such as the IWRC’s Basic Wildlife Rehabilitation
 - Hands-on training provided by in-state trainers such as Focus Wildlife
 - Training materials such as workbooks and manuals
2. Increase the ability of rehabilitation facilities to admit and treat more specialized species such as large carnivores, raptors, cervids (deer family), and bats by providing currently permitted wildlife rehabilitators with training on new species and current techniques
 - Special species and Endorsement training at out-of-state facilities for large carnivores, cervids (deer family), raptors, bats, or other specialty species, such as at the University of Minnesota Raptor Center and Wildlife Center of Virginia Wildlife Academy
 - Continuing education fund to allow rehabilitators to take more extensive and specialized classes
3. Increase capacity and expand facilities to be able to admit a larger number of animals by providing currently permitted wildlife rehabilitators with more goods and services
 - Large carnivore rehabilitation manual
 - Cervid (deer family) rehabilitation training manual

The capacity to complete these actions exists in the Wildlife Rehabilitation Account due to historic revenue outpacing historic expenditure authority. The \$2.00 revenue from each personalized license plate purchased over the last five biennia has remained consistent, averaging \$360,000 each biennium. However, expenditure authority had not matched revenue until the 15-17 Biennium. This historic imbalance built a fund balance allowing for a projected one-time capacity. The previous 2021-23 budget request, “A8- Wildlife Rehabilitation,” proposed to spend the fund balance over four fiscal years, but increased expenditure authority was only approved for fiscal years 2022 and 2023. Therefore, this request is to increase expenditure authority for fiscal years 2023 and 2024 as intended.

Alternatives explored

The original funding request included the 2023-25 biennium; without increasing the expenditure authority of the account, the Department will not be able to complete the plan as intended. The extreme lack in southern, central, and eastern Washington leaves animals injured and abandoned, taken home by the untrained and naïve public, or brought to homes claiming to be wildlife rehabilitators. Administrative codes prohibit transport across the state due to disease transmission and transporting animals to neighboring states is not feasible. Additionally, there are enough facilities to train new rehabilitators in these regions.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

In previous biennia, \$150,000 per fiscal year has been made available as grants permitted to rehabilitators. Additional expenditure authority will allow the Department to focus and additional \$300,000 per biennium as pass-through grants, agreements, and contracts to increase wildlife rehabilitation capacity in Washington.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

This request includes continued pass-through costs (Object N) of \$300,000 in the 2023-25 biennium.

Workforce Assumptions:

This proposal does not change WDFW FTEs.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This proposal will support the state's ability to achieve the Results Washington goal for Sustainable Energy and Clean Environment, and Healthy and Safe Communities. Providing more access to wildlife rehabilitation contributes to healthy ecosystems and to public health.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This decision package directly supports the Department's 25-Year Strategic Plan strategy "Proactively Address Conservation Challenges," and "Engage Communities through Recreation and Stewardship." The Department plans to increase wildlife rehabilitation capacity by adding at least one permitted wildlife rehabilitation facility per WDFW Region by 2025. This will increase the ability of rehabilitation facilities to admit and treat more specialized species by providing training on new species and current techniques.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Preserve and Restore Terrestrial Habitats and Species, \$150,000 per fiscal year, Wildlife Rehabilitation Account (14A)

This package will support the rehabilitation of wildlife, which in turn contributes to a robust ecosystem.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Increase in number of permitted wildlife rehabilitation facilities by one/WDFW Region, especially in underserved central and eastern Washington.
- Increase in number of individual animals and species of wildlife admitted into permitted wildlife rehabilitation facilities.
- Increase in number of healthy wild animals being released back into the breeding populations.
- Increase in reportable disease reports to WDFW Epidemiologists.
- Public satisfaction in being able to directly help wildlife.
- Career satisfaction for those individuals wishing to become permitted wildlife rehabilitators.
- Decrease in calls for wildlife rehabilitation assistance and complaints to WDFW Customer Service.
- Decrease in wildlife biologists' and wildlife officer workloads involving wildlife rehabilitation with greatly lessened time in pick-up, transporting, and dispatching sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife.

Wildlife rehabilitators are required to submit Annual Reports reporting the number of mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians admitted to their facilities and the number of animals released back to the wild. Wildlife rehabilitators are also required to submit their Daily Ledgers tracking the species and disposition outcomes of each animal admitted to their clinic. These data will be one of the metrics used to track the increase in numbers and species of wildlife admitted to and released from wildlife rehabilitation centers. A database is also kept on each wildlife rehabilitator, an obvious way to keep count in the number of newly permitted rehabilitators.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. Using pass-through grants, agreements, and contracts, the Department aims to increase community engagement and make wildlife rehabilitation more accessible.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

This proposal aims to address target populations that do not currently have access to wildlife rehabilitators, or training to become certified. Without the 2023-25 biennial expenditure authority increased, there will continue to be gaps in facilities.

Target Populations or Communities:

Communities in eastern, central, and southern Washington will benefit most from this proposal, as they have the fewest wildlife rehabilitation services. Recruiting and training will be focused there to address the disparities.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 1 Smart Growth by increasing WDFW wildlife rehabilitation staff and facility capacity which is necessary to address current and predicted increases to wildlife conflict and injury associated with population growth and land development and part of the adaptive management process. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship by increasing WDFW wildlife rehabilitation staff and facility capacity which is necessary to address current and predicted increases to wildlife conflict and injury associated increased outdoor recreation. This decision package is directly aligned with the Action (ID#159) Develop, fund, and promote culturally relevant projects and programs to encourage and incentivize behavior changes that will protect, restore, and enable responsible enjoyment and stewardship of Puget Sound by implementing key opportunity Increase understanding of the connections between outdoor recreation and stewardship activities, by increasing capacity for WDFW to engage the public in stewardship practices related to recreation and injured wildlife. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by increasing WDFW wildlife rehabilitation staff and facility capacity which is necessary to address current and predicted increases to wildlife conflict and injury associated with population growth and land development and part of the adaptive management process.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

N/A

Stakeholder Response:

The Department anticipates support from the public, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), animal shelters and veterinarians. The public often bring in sick or injured wildlife to shelters or veterinarians. If there is no wildlife rehabilitation facility available, often the wildlife will have to be euthanized.

Veterinarians feeling uncomfortable with treating wildlife will be encouraged to attend the trainings and workshops. WDFW intends to get at least one of the trainings approved by RACE (Registry of Approved Continuing Education) which allows veterinarians to receive approved continuing education credits for the course through the American Association of Veterinary State Boards.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

Reference Documents

[21-23BN A8 - Wildlife Rehabilitation.pdf](#)

[SFY 2022 14A 001Balance Sheet.pdf](#)

[SFY 2022 Close 002Statement of Revenues Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances.pdf](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. N	\$150	\$150	\$300	\$0	\$0	\$0

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Agency Recommendation Summary

Zooplankton are a cornerstone of the marine food web and a well-grounded indicator of ecosystem function. Zooplankton populations can effectively capture the relationship between physical and biological ecosystem changes, creating a better understanding how physical stressors, manmade and natural, are affecting the entire Puget Sound food web. The purpose of this package is to maintain the zooplankton monitoring program, so it continues to measure the prey field for salmon and other fish and how it correlates with survival, and provides improved forecasting tools and guidance toward management decisions to set harvest expectations and optimize recovery strategies. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$504	\$504	\$1,008	\$504	\$504	\$1,008
Total Expenditures	\$504	\$504	\$1,008	\$504	\$504	\$1,008

Decision Package Description

Zooplankton monitoring is a critical and cost-effective means of developing robust metrics of ecosystem health that can be used to: 1) closely track rapidly changing environments, 2) measure prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound, and 3) improve salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management. The data produced by this program provides the foundation for understanding the effects of stressors. Local stressors include contaminants, runoff, and competition for prey; global stressors include climate variability and climate change on ecosystem function, and spatially explicit prey availability for juvenile salmon, forage fish, and the entire Puget Sound food web.

A partial version of this request was proposed and funded during for the 2021-23 biennium. The funding request at the time was to supplement a two-year grant provided by the National Estuary Program. This request is to fully fund the zooplankton monitoring program going forward to ensure this data is consistently available to measure ecosystem health.

The zooplankton monitoring program is a collaborative effort that began in 2014, and involves 11 tribal, county, state, federal, academic, and nonprofit entities. The program was initiated via the Salish Sea Marine Survival Project (SSMSP) when scientists determined that a leading hypothesis for the decline in Salish Sea-origin juvenile Chinook and coho marine survival is a change in food availability. Understanding the relationship between juvenile salmon and forage fish, and their primary food source (zooplankton) is the critical missing link in this puzzle. The importance of this program has been recognized by the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program (PSEMP), the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP), and the Southern Resident Orca Task Force which identifies continuing zooplankton monitoring as important to recovery efforts for Southern Resident Orcas in their 2019 Final Report and Recommendations.

The program samples throughout Puget Sound and adjacent northern waters (Bellingham Bay, San Juan Islands) (Figure 1). Samples are collected at each of these sites every two weeks, from March through October, and sampling partners that have the capability to sample year-round take additional samples monthly in November through February. Sampling design for this project was created based on discussions among physical oceanographers, zooplankton ecologists, and salmon/forage fish ecologists with the intent of sampling locations that are 1) representative of broad regions within each Puget Sound basin and 2) representative of foraging areas for planktivorous fish. Vertical tow locations to sample as “Ecosystem Indicators” were chosen at deepest locations and oblique tows used to capture the “Prey Field” are conducted at multiple sites within each region. Samples are collected by program partners at the following organizations: Lummi Nation, Kwiáht, NOAA, Tulalip Tribes, Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribes, Stillaguamish Tribe, WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, King County, Nisqually Indian Tribe, Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group, and WA Dept. of Ecology.

Once samples are collected, the samples are preserved and sent to the University of Washington (UW). Sampling data sheets and water quality data are reviewed and compiled by WDFW for data quality assurance and formatting prior to transferring the data to UW. Sample processing, analysis, and results reporting are provided by the Zooplankton Lab at UW’s School of Oceanography. Once analysis and data review are completed, the results of annual surveys are provided online where it is available to the public as well as researchers and resource managers.

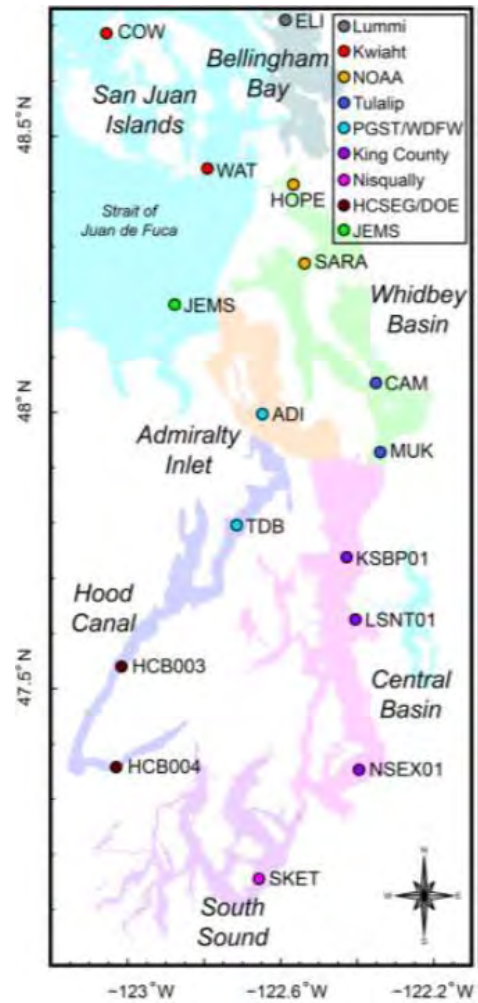


Figure 1. Map of study area. Map colors and italicized text indicate major Puget Sound basins, and circles indicate sampling locations. The color of each circle indicates the group(s) associated with sampling that location (legend in top right): Lummi Nation, Kwiaht, NOAA/Stillaguamish, Tulalip Tribes, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribes, WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife, King County, Nisqually Indian Tribe, Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group, and WA Dept of Ecology (also responsible for JEMS program site). Analysis, but not sampling, of the JEMS station is included in this program.

This program was designed by subject matter experts to provide sufficient data about regional and seasonal prey base composition and abundance to be used by resource managers to help understand fluctuations and variations in salmon and forage fish survival and abundance. The program relies on a collaborative network of organizations to provide high resolution regional data at lower costs than could be achieved by a centralized sampling program by a single organization. Several of the sampling partners provide ongoing sampling at no cost to the program beyond supplies and replacement of program specific sampling gear, like plankton nets and flow meters. The increased administrative costs of coordinating across so many groups are offset by providing more consistent sampling, and significantly lower travel and vessel costs. Less costly alternatives to the current program would almost certainly reduce spatial and/or temporal sampling coverage, resulting in lower resolution data that would be less informative and would degrade the value of the program for resources managers and the sampling partners, and would diminish the value of the 9 years of data already collected.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

Financial support for this program came from various sources since 2014 but work during the 2019-21 biennium and part of the 2021-23 biennium was funded by the state. For the 2021-23 biennium, grant funding was received through the Nearshore Estuary Program (NEP) for most of the costs in fiscal year 2021. This one-time award was not available in fiscal year 2022. The funding requested in this package is necessary to ensure the program can continue sampling and generating data through the entirety of the 2023-25 biennium.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

This program's budget can best be explained in three parts: program coordination, sample collection, and sample processing and analysis.

Program coordination is the responsibility of WDFW staff in the Fish Program, and this staff is primarily responsible for stakeholder communication, meeting facilitation, collaborations, data and sample tracking, outreach, training, quality assurance, managing inventory, and contract administration. WDFW program coordination will require a 0.5 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 2 in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing to coordinate with sampling partners and agency primary investigator. Objects A Salaries and B Benefits total \$47,000 each fiscal year; Goods & services costs include \$3,000 dollars to maintain the sampling collection, processing, and storage supplies and gear maintenance and replacement (jars, preservative, nets). Object J includes \$10,000 for sampling field equipment (flow meters) and \$12,550 for vessel operation and maintenance costs associated with samples collected by the WDFW Shellfish Unit. Object G Travel includes \$1,000 in mileage (1 Motor Pool pickup truck travelling 100 miles/month x \$0.83/mile associated with intermittent travel to retrieve samples and data and providing training to sampling partners.

Sample collection is the responsibility of the program's sampling partners including Lummi Nation, Kwiáht, NOAA, Stillaguamish Tribe, Tulalip Tribes, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribes, WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife, King County, Nisqually Indian Tribe, Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group, and WA Dept of Ecology. These groups are responsible for collecting samples and associated data in the field and providing them to UW and WDFW. The cost per sampling group depends on the number of sites sampled, frequency of sampling, and the level of effort needed to collect samples, and these costs help to offset sampling partners' expenses such as fuel, vehicle leases, vessel maintenance, and staff time. Object C Professional Service Contracts include the annual cost for each sampling group to conduct sample and data collection twice each month at a cost ranging from \$5,200 to \$21,000, for a combined total of \$96,000 in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing.

Sample processing and analysis is the responsibility of the Zooplankton Lab at UW. The Zooplankton Lab receives samples and associated data, processes the samples, and analyzes, interprets, and reports the results. Costs associated with sample processing and analysis include laboratory supplies (\$6,433), laboratory staff salary and benefits (\$164,000) including the program's principal investigator, Dr. Julie Keister, training, data management and dissemination (\$2,900), and overhead (20% overhead negotiated at the beginning of the program). Sample processing and analysis total for sampling in Object C is \$208,000 per year in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing.

An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

To coordinate with sample partners and WDFW's principal investigator, a 0.5 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 2 is required for a total of \$47,000 in salaries and benefits each fiscal year.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

The Puget Sound-wide zooplankton monitoring program supports the Governor's Result's Washington Goal 3: Sustainable Energy and Clean Environment. By keeping the Puget Sound ecosystem healthy by providing the foundation for understanding the effects of local stressors such as contaminants, runoff, and competition for prey; and global stressors such as climate variability and climate change on ecosystem function and spatially explicit prey availability for juvenile salmon, forage fish, and the entire Puget Sound food web. The need to continue this program was highlighted in the Southern Resident Orca Task Force's 2019 Final Report and Recommendations, and the Puget Sound Partnership recently selected the data produced by this program as one of the new Vital Sign Indicators of Puget Sound ecosystem health.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This decision package directly supports the Department's 25-Year Strategic Plan strategy "Proactively Address Conservation Challenges," and "Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions" by continuing the Puget Sound-wide zooplankton monitoring to deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions. The collaborative nature of the program embodies wholistic conservation by fostering partnerships with groups throughout the region.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Preserve and Restore Aquatic Habitat and Species, \$504,000 General Fund-State, and 0.5 FTE

This package supports our active inventory item "Preserve and Restore Aquatic Habitat and Species" by maintaining healthy ecosystems and also by the supporting strategy to "recover and sustain diverse aquatic populations" through the department's management of unclassified and non-game fish and shellfish populations to ensure they are maintained at sustainable levels in the natural environment.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Priority research needs being met
- Technical assistance interactions

This program helps to meet priority research needs and provide technical assistance by collecting and analyzing over 400 samples per year throughout Puget Sound during critical times of the year for growth and survival of forage fish and juvenile salmon. These samples are analyzed and interpreted, and the results are disseminated annually to all the sampling partners and made available to the public. The information provided by this program is used for forecasting abundance of commercial and recreationally important species and helps to provided context for changes in the environment, such as climate change. The goal of this proposal is to maintain the current sampling capacity to provide high quality data on an annual basis for the foreseeable future.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

Understanding regional and temporal differences in zooplankton composition and abundance helps us to understand changes and differences in the health of the Puget Sound ecosystem and its sub-basins and can help to identify which regions and communities may be most affected by these changes, and what actions may be most effective.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

N/A

Target Populations or Communities:

This proposal would continue the partnerships established with 5 tribes, 2 NGOs, 2 state agencies, 1 county agency, 1 federal agency, and 1 academic institution, representing a broad community with the common goal of improving the health of Puget Sound through better science and information. The priorities of the program are decided by a steering committee comprised of program partners and other stakeholders with a vested interest in the acquisition and utilization of the information provided by the Zooplankton Monitoring Program in pursuit of this goal.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery by continuing to implement a zooplankton monitoring program that measures prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound and improves salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by supporting a zooplankton monitoring program that will inform adaptive management by assessing environmental changes and prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound, and improving salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management. Through these efforts, this decision package is directly aligned with Strategy 15 key opportunity to integrate climate change responses by ensuring sustainable support for monitoring efforts, for example, adult and juvenile migrant monitoring, intensively monitored watersheds, effectiveness of recovery actions, and population assessments accounting for different sources of mortality at different life-stages (freshwater to ocean conditions, etc.) that enable management decisions to be grounded in accurate assessments of current and projected future conditions. This includes continuing zooplankton monitoring, research and monitoring to ensure healthy forage fish populations, including herring, and advancing food web models (for example, the Atlantis Model).

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C research and monitoring by continuing to implement a zooplankton monitoring program that measures prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound and improves salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#121) Direct and leverage funding and investments to advance science, monitoring, and adaptive management for Puget Sound recovery, by supporting a zooplankton monitoring program that will inform adaptive management by assessing environmental changes and prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound, and improving salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management. Through this work, this decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID#122) Coordinate efforts to assess and report on ecosystem conditions and the effectiveness of ecosystem recovery strategies and actions by implementing key opportunity Develop and apply innovative tools to understand ecosystem conditions as they change over time, and to predict and document those changes, ensure that reporting systems are piloted with partners (for example, LIOs), by supporting a collaborative zooplankton monitoring program among state, federal, academic, local, and tribal partners.

This decision package implements the Priority Action 11 build upon recommendations of the Salish Sea Marine Survival Project to further define bottom-up and top-down food web effects on juvenile salmonid mortality in Puget Sound from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by continuing to implement a zooplankton monitoring program that measures food web effects through prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound and improves salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management. This monitoring program was initiated by the Salish Sea Marine Survival Project when scientists determined that a leading hypothesis for the decline in Salish Sea-origin juvenile Chinook and coho marine survival is a change in food availability.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 16 Support the Puget Sound zooplankton sampling program as a Chinook and forage fish management tool and directly implements the Puget Sound relevant SALMON strategy Recommendations 6, Address predatory and food web issues for salmon and 8 Strengthen science, monitoring and accountability by continuing to implement a zooplankton monitoring program that measures prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound and improves salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

This program is built around a partnership with the following governmental organizations: Lummi Nation, NOAA, Stillaguamish Tribe, Tulalip Tribes, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribes, WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, King County, Nisqually Indian Tribe, WA Dept. of Natural Resources, and WA Dept. of Ecology. All these groups have been extremely supportive of the program, they have been instrumental to its success, and

continuation of this program provides evidence of the state's commitment to science-based management.

Stakeholder Response:

Several non-government groups are partners of this program, including: Kwiáht, Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group, and the University of Washington. These groups have been extremely supportive of the program, and they have been instrumental to its success. Additionally, the PSEMP Forage Fish & Food Webs Work Group, (which has a broad membership of government, non-government, concerned citizens), has supported and advocated for continuation of this program. The Department expects that other NGOs such as the Audubon Society and Long Live the Kings would support this program as well.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

The need to continue the Puget Sound-wide zooplankton monitoring program was highlighted in the Southern Resident Orca Task Force's 2019 Final Report and Recommendations (recommendation 16), and the Puget Sound Partnership recently selected the data produced by this program as one of the new Vital Sign Indicators of Puget Sound ecosystem health.

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$33	\$33	\$66	\$33	\$33	\$66
Obj. B	\$14	\$14	\$28	\$14	\$14	\$28
Obj. C	\$304	\$304	\$608	\$304	\$304	\$608
Obj. E	\$3	\$3	\$6	\$3	\$3	\$6
Obj. G	\$1	\$1	\$2	\$1	\$1	\$2
Obj. J	\$23	\$23	\$46	\$23	\$23	\$46
Obj. T	\$126	\$126	\$252	\$126	\$126	\$252

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Policy Level Decision Packages



Pika peekin over rocks in Okanogan National Forest. Photo credit: Scott Fitkin



Agency Recommendation Summary

Habitat loss and degradation, climate change effects, pollution, wildlife disease, and invasive species threaten the state’s biodiversity. Fish and wildlife are public resources, and it is the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (WDFW) mandate to conserve them for current and future residents of Washington. WDFW needs funding to stem the tide of biodiversity loss and accelerate our work with partners to implement the State Wildlife Action Plan and other protection and recovery efforts in Washington’s most important habitats. We aim to develop and implement action plans for 80% of at-risk species and increase public participation in conservation by 25%. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	123.3	133.3	128.3	133.3	133.3	133.3
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$23,167	\$24,429	\$47,596	\$24,429	\$24,429	\$48,858
Total Expenditures	\$23,167	\$24,429	\$47,596	\$24,429	\$24,429	\$48,858

Decision Package Description

Washington state is experiencing unprecedented losses of biodiversity. For example, recent breeding bird surveys indicate significant reductions in species such as swallows that rely on insects for food. The Western bumblebee used to be widespread across the state, and now it is extremely difficult to find. WDFW and partners have been working to recover the Northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, pygmy rabbit, salmon, Southern Resident orca, and a host of other imperiled species. But the continued habitat loss and degradation, climate change effects, pollution, invasive species, and disease continue to accelerate the loss of biodiversity in Washington. Gaps in knowledge about how species and their habitats are responding to these pressures limit the effectiveness of protection and recovery actions.

At the same time, there is hope. We know what works, and where we need to invest additional resources to make real progress. We’ve had tremendous successes when we’ve invested in the science and data that helps prioritize actions to reverse declines. For example, fishers once again roam Washington forests due to reintroduction efforts. Western pond turtles are making a comeback thanks to collective efforts to protect their habitat, reintroduce turtles to areas that had lost populations, reduce threats such as invasive bullfrogs, and work to address disease. Investments in shrubsteppe ecosystems are giving us a solid foundation to save pygmy rabbits, Greater sage-grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, and other species that depend on shrubsteppe habitat.

We have demonstrated that when there is adequate funding and a collaborative, science-based plan, we can be effective at overcoming conservation challenges such as recovering the bald eagle and peregrine falcon, increasing populations of snowy plovers and Taylor's checkerspot butterflies, and down-listing canary rockfish. We know what to do, but our progress is not keeping pace with the problem. In 2007, the Washington Biodiversity Council published the Washington Biodiversity Conservation Strategy that includes the following recommendations:

- Incorporate biodiversity conservation into land use plans and development practices.
- Strengthen the available science and information on biodiversity.
- Develop incentives to encourage voluntary actions to conserve biodiversity on private lands.
- Educate and engage the public to provide Washington residents with information about the value of biodiversity and the steps they can take to help conserve it.
- Achieve results by improving governance through better integration and coordination among state and local governments.

Fifteen years later, the state has yet to implement the Biodiversity Council’s recommendations due to inadequate and insecure funding. Meanwhile, many at-risk species populations continue to plummet, and WDFW is falling further behind in being able to achieve conservation goals and the mandate to “preserve, protect and perpetuate” fish and wildlife. There is also a disparity in our funding for critical conservation actions. Wildlife species that are hunted (also known as “game” species) such as deer, elk, bear, turkey, bass, trout, and perch often have permanent funding sources to support research, ongoing monitoring, and management. Unfortunately, the rest of the state’s biodiversity work is chronically underfunded, leaving the Department and policy makers with science gaps, incomplete data on fish, wildlife, and habitat conditions, and the inability to comprehensively implement actions that recover species or even prevent their declines.

More investment is needed to do the work we know will be successful. WDFW uses a comprehensive strategy called the State Wildlife Action Plan for conserving the state's at-risk species and their habitats. The State Wildlife Action Plan is part of a nationwide effort by all 50 states and five U.S. territories to develop plans that 1) objectively assess the status of the state's wildlife and habitats, 2) identify key problems they face, and 3) outline the actions needed to conserve them over the long term. A guiding principle of the State Wildlife Action Plan is to identify actions needed to conserve wildlife and their habitats before species become too rare and restoration efforts too costly. Washington's plan is due for an important and federally required update in 2025.

The Washington State Wildlife Action Plan focuses on supporting the state's 268 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and the habitats on which they depend. It informs WDFW's conservation priorities and actions statewide. SGCN include species that are state or federally listed as threatened, endangered, or sensitive, as well as additional species thought to need conservation attention. The State Wildlife Action Plan also informs WDFW's "Priority Habitats and Species" program and provides tools and informational resources to support collaborative conservation initiatives across a range of organizations, entities, and states.

Although we have a comprehensive State Wildlife Action Plan, WDFW does not have the resources to implement identified conservation actions for approximately 95% of all SGCN in Washington. The Department also continues to fall further behind in our knowledge about SGCN populations, with a growing need to fill critical data gaps.

If we do not act now to provide adequate funding to focus conservation action toward SGCN populations and their habitats, we can expect to see increased federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) listings with additional regulatory burdens for communities, a devastating loss of biodiversity, and unreversible impacts to Washington's economy and public health.

This funding package is laser focused on what we know works to stem biodiversity loss. We will:

1. Develop and implement species recovery plans;
2. Stop or slow declines in species and habitat loss;
3. Improve our knowledge of current species and habitats status, trends, and needs; and
4. Support partnerships and public engagement to maximize biodiversity protection and recovery actions across Washington.

These actions, including specific habitats, species, programs, and partners are further detailed below, in the Appendix, and in the Attachments.

The results of funding these actions will positively impact not only species and habitats, but the human and economic health of Washington state. Investing in biodiversity means preventing costly future species listings and regulatory burdens, ensuring the health of agricultural pollinators, protecting the habitats that provide us with clean air and water, and ensuring that Washington's current and future generations can enjoy the landscapes and wildlife that make our state special. Funding actions now will provide the best opportunity to avoid much larger public resource investments in the future. Washington cannot afford to continue this trajectory of devastating biodiversity decline.

Summary of priority investments

As the agency of expertise and with the mandate to "preserve, protect and perpetuate" fish, wildlife and habitats, WDFW needs resources to effectively implement the State Wildlife Action Plan, allowing WDFW and our partners to abate threats, increase populations, protect and restore habitat, and fill science knowledge gaps that are critical to success. This proposal carefully integrates and strengthens the Department's internal, cross-program coordination and collaboration with our external partners to ensure the most effective implementation of the future resources and biodiversity outcomes that Washington's leaders and residents expect.

1. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT RECOVERY PLANS

- Increase capacity to implement or assist partners in species and habitat protection and recovery actions. (Examples: increase on-the-ground actions such as population augmentations or reintroductions, address known threats such as predation from invasive animals or disease, and improve habitat conditions necessary to support species vital rates)
- Increase planning capacity to promptly address habitat and species recovery needs (Examples: reduce delays or backlogs in the development and implementation of recovery plans for already listed species and increase the pace and clarity of priority habitat and species guidance documents)

2. STOP OR SLOW DECLINES IN SPECIES AND HABITAT LOSS

- Focus efforts on key at-risk species and habitats (Examples: take actions to keep at-risk species from becoming listed under the federal

ESA. The State Wildlife Action Plan provides a strong foundation from which to act; many times we know what actions to take, but lack the resources to implement)

- Enhance the level of support for local, state, and federal decision makers and landowners through more effective and complete species and habitat information, guidance, and technical assistance (Examples: improve timely updates and information delivery to cities and counties)
- Improve compliance with existing laws and rules (Examples: assist landowners in complying with fish protection regulations and supporting local governments' implementation of fish and wildlife protection and planning under the Growth Management Act and Shoreline Management Act)
- Improve landowner participation in biodiversity recovery (Examples: Increase outreach and participation in WDFW's "Habitat at Home" program; increase outreach and participation in Farm Bill programs designed to support agricultural producers while also benefiting fish and wildlife and private lands access)
- Get ahead of what we face by looking ahead to proactively address anticipated or predicted challenges (Examples: improve our understanding of the likely effects of climate change on fish, wildlife, and habitats and inform policy development and decision making upfront to avoid unintended consequences or delays in actions)

3. IMPROVE OUR KNOWLEDGE OF SPECIES AND HABITATS STATUS, TRENDS, AND NEEDS

- Increase science, planning, and action implementation capacity to fill critical knowledge gaps that will enable enhanced clarity of species population status and trends, habitat conditions, and the development of effective protection and recovery plans and guidance for the Department's implementation actions and assist partners in making informed decisions that improve the protection and recovery of Washington's biodiversity. (Examples: Conservation biologists will work with research scientists to develop monitoring protocols for population status, distribution, and trends as well as for monitoring effectiveness of recovery actions. We will also work to fill gaps in knowledge about climate change effects on biodiversity, disease, and forest management strategies.)

4. SUPPORT PARTNERSHIPS, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT, AND CONSERVATION EDUCATION TO RESTORE BIODIVERSITY

- Support critical partners biodiversity work (Examples: WDFW provides technical assistance, conservation guidance documents and data, and when possible, pass-through funding to support our partners biodiversity work. These partners are established in their local communities and can put conservation actions on the ground that are necessary for success.)
- Grow community awareness, engagement, and participation in recovering Washington's biodiversity (Examples: Increase our public engagement focus on broader communities to improve their awareness and increase participation in biodiversity protection and recovery actions. In other words, help residents contribute to conservation in their spaces, including technical and potentially financial assistance through WDFW and our partners.)
- Support future conservation leaders and stewards (Examples: WDFW's conservation education program partnered with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) in 2022 to develop the first fully aligned Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) lessons in Washington that focus on fish and wildlife conservation (3rd grade, salmon focus). Building on this momentum, we will continue our partnership with OSPI to better support local educators and future conservation champions around the state. Informal educational opportunities such as nature walks and community science projects are just as important as formal classroom education to reach diverse audiences and encourage lifelong learning for youth, families, and adults. Additional investments will remove barriers for people to experience nature such as coordination support, transportation, equipment, and language access.)

Road map to success

The investments above will be done in the context of a broader plan, or "fish and wildlife conservation road map" that involves multiple partners. In coordination with Tribes, partner organizations, and the public, WDFW will lead a statewide fish and wildlife conservation initiative to expand action and engagement for a "One Washington" approach to landscape-scale ecosystem recovery and fish and wildlife conservation. As a component of this conservation road map project, we will also engage Tribes and partners in the development of a Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA) Investment Strategy which will identify priority areas for investing to expand the on-the-ground actions identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan. RAWA is pending federal legislation that would fund work to recover declining species and habitats in the United States. RAWA will be a historic step to recovering and protecting at-risk species, but it will still not meet the ever-growing financial cost to restore biodiversity in Washington. WDFW will review our and others' data and products to assess the current state of fish and wildlife conservation and identify the most significant needs and coordinate actions. In addition, WDFW will collaborate with regional, national, and international partners to establish common conservation principles and priorities.

The conservation road map will guide the 2025 update of the State Wildlife Action Plan, which must include the following eight elements:

1. Information on the distribution and abundance of wildlife, including low and declining populations, that describes the diversity and health of the state's wildlife.
2. Descriptions of locations and relative conditions of habitats essential to species in need of conservation.
3. Descriptions of problems that may adversely affect species or their habitats, and priority research and survey efforts.
4. Descriptions of conservation actions proposed to conserve the identified species and habitats.
5. Plans for monitoring species and habitats and plans for monitoring the effectiveness of the conservation actions and for adapting these conservation actions to respond to new information.
6. Descriptions of procedures to review the plan at intervals not to exceed 10 years.
7. Coordination with federal, state, and local agencies and Indian tribes in developing and implementing the wildlife action plan.
8. Broad public participation in developing and implementing the wildlife action plan.

Alternatives explored

Status quo and lower costs will continue or further challenge WDFW's ability to preserve, protect, and perpetuate biodiversity. A significant contributing factor to our current state is inadequate funding and staff capacity to accomplish the work necessary to fulfill our mandate and the work we are directed to do through the RCW and WAC.

RCW and WAC changes may be necessary in the future, but we won't be able to propose necessary improvements until we accomplish the work described in this decision package. The focused and critical need is increased funding and staff capacity to accomplish our work at a pace and with an effectiveness to catch up on current biodiversity conditions, needs, and solutions to protect and restore Washington's biodiversity.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This proposal is a long-needed expansion of the non-game species work that continues to lag due to inadequate resources. This expansion will allow WDFW to begin to catch up on our gaps in knowledge and develop a more comprehensive understanding of biodiversity's current state and the actions necessary to protect and recover Washington's biodiversity in the face of human population growth, climate change, and increasing invasive species and disease. Success depends on a clear vision and ample resources to ensure that WDFW and all our partners are implementing their portions of the actions to protect and restore biodiversity.

We will see an increase in recovery plan development and implementation, preventative actions to reduce or minimize habitat loss or degradation, increases in habitat restoration, and a broad engagement from the residents of Washington.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and Benefits, objects A and B, for 128.3 direct full-time equivalent (FTE) positions total \$26.5 million in biennium 2023-25 (133.3 ongoing). Goods and Services, object E, include \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year, as well as central agency costs.

Contract, Services, Pass-through, and Project Implementation Funding

- \$250,000 per biennium for Olympia Oyster recovery (Object C).
- \$4 million per biennium for species recovery and habitat restoration project implementation, with strong collaboration with conservation and academic partners (Object E).
- \$886,000 per biennium to update technical guidance documents and support social marketing project to identify barriers and incentives for private landowner participation (Object E).
- \$850,000 per biennium to pass through to Puget Sound Restoration Fund for Pinto Abalone recovery (object N).
- \$70K per biennium to provide grant funding to Title I schools for field trip transportation (Object N).

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classifications and the associated work for full program deployments are as follows:

Fish and Wildlife Biologists, 70.5 FTEs

- Implement species recovery actions in marine and terrestrial ecosystems.
- Support habitat protection and restoration projects with willing landowners.
- Collect data to fill science gaps.
- Plan and facilitate conservation actions
- Curate and manage data

Scientific Technicians, 21.0 FTEs

- Collect data to fill science gaps.
- Implement species recovery actions.

Environmental Planners, 13.0 FTEs

- Strategic planning and proactive engagement/coordination with partners
- Place-based restoration support

Management Analysts, 6.0 FTEs

- Habitat and land use strategic planning
- Project management support

IT Specialists, 4.3

- Data analysis and management for HRCD and IMW work
- Application development and support, maintenance and replacement of legacy systems, and business support
- Manage SGCN population data

Research Scientists, 5.0

- Research key questions to advance effective recovery
- Develop efficient monitoring protocols and analyze data
- Model population dynamics

Cartographers 3.0 FTEs

- Review change detection data for accuracy

Community Outreach and Environmental Education Specialists, 3.5 FTEs

- Coordinate informal and formal learning opportunities for people to connect with nature.
- Support people to create habitat at their home.

Environmental Engineers, 2.0 FTEs

- Provide technical assistance

Natural Resource Scientists, 2.0 FTEs

- Provide policy direction
- Manage teams of conservation biologists
- Guide and facilitate conservation action

WMS 2, 2.0 FTEs

- Oversee coordination of RAWA and State Wildlife Action Plan implementation.
- Manage conservation education program.

Communications Consultant 1.0 FTEs

- Increase public awareness and outreach on co-existing with wildlife and engaging in conservation and stewardship.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This package directly supports the Governor's third goal for "Sustainable energy & a clean environment: Building a legacy of resource stewardship for the next generation of Washingtonians". Additionally, protecting and restoring habitats will improve overall watershed health which is a priority in the Governor's Salmon Strategy.

The Governor's Salmon Strategy specifically calls for improvements to be made in protecting and restoring salmon habitat. Salmon require properly functioning watershed conditions to have the best chance for recovery. This will require more of the public having clarity about the problem and the potential solutions and engaging and contributing through their individual and community actions. This proposal will provide and implement such an approach.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This package directly supports three of the four strategies in the Department's 25-year plan: 1) proactively address conservation challenges, 2) engage communities through recreation and stewardship, and 3) deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions.

WDFW Activity Inventory

This package directly supports three activities:

1. Preserve & Restore Aquatic Habitat & Species. \$15.8 million and 43.3 FTEs
2. Preserve & Restore Terrestrial Habitat and Species. \$26 million and 68.7 FTEs
3. Manage Fishing Opportunities. \$5.8 million and 16.3 FTEs

Performance Outcomes:

Biodiversity is vital for public health, culture, and economy. Native species and ecosystems contribute billions of dollars each year to fisheries, timber harvest, outdoor recreation, and other sectors of Washington's economy. The World Economic Council has identified that ecosystem services (i.e., nature's benefits for people) support \$3 trillion towards the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). People also rely on healthy ecosystems for clean water, clean air, natural flood control, noise pollution absorption, reduced heat island effects in urban areas, carbon sequestration, cultural practices, recreation, and physical and mental health benefits.

Our ultimate performance outcome is the reduction of the number of fish and wildlife species that need our help to survive and thrive, and an intermediate performance outcome is the improvement of the quality and quantity of the fish and wildlife habitat most at risk.

Our 25-year strategic plan (adopted in October 2020) sets the following goals for those outcomes:

- 80% of SGCN have been surveyed and incorporated into strategies and plans that ensure their conservation
- 10% net gain in the quality and quantity of our most important fish and wildlife habitat

This package will increase this capability, thereby increasing the help we can give troubled species. By preventing more species from becoming listed under the federal ESA, we can prevent regulatory burdens on local communities and have greater success at recovering biodiversity in Washington.

**These increased outcomes will be further enhanced with the future federal investment in this work via RAWA.

Anticipated outcomes for SGCN include:

- Increase SGCN species surveyed to 75%
- Double the number of SGCN species with active implementation of conservation actions
- Increase unclassified surveyed fish to 67%
- Increase food fish surveyed and included in plans to 94%
- Increase game fish species surveyed to 60%

Anticipated outcomes for habitat protection and restoration include:

- Increased presence in proactive planning efforts that affect the protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitats.
 - Increased participation and support for cities and counties within each process of their Growth Management Act/Shoreline Management Act planning steps (e.g., not just compensation plans and Critical Areas Ordinances, but also the comprehensive plan updates, zoning ordinances, open space planning, Urban Growth Area expansions and periodic updates for counties and cities)
- 25-30% increase of site-scale implementation decisions and ability to influence fish and wildlife habitat protection and enhancement.
- Increased restoration within six additional watersheds/areas by building landowner and community support for salmon recovery and biodiversity restoration, and then working with willing landowners and community groups to design and implement specific enhancement and restoration projects on the ground.
- Regarding public participation in conservation-related activities, our 25-year strategic plan sets the following goal:
- 25% increase in participation in fish and wildlife-related activities, particularly among youth, racially diverse communities, hunters, anglers, and watchable wildlife enthusiasts.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The public engagement component is designed to reach all residents of Washington state, so that we can learn the best way to improve biodiversity and the positive effect it has on human health and wellbeing within that community. For too long, urban areas have been the place we concentrate humans at the expense of natural habitat conditions. Now we know that this approach along with climate change is resulting in biodiversity loss, heat-island effects that are increasing mortality, and health challenges in urban disadvantaged communities. Restoring natural habitat conditions and urban biodiversity has been shown to contribute to reducing heat-island effects, reducing noise, air and water pollution, and even improving overall mental health and attention in children.

WDFW will be vastly expanding our efforts to increase participation from diverse and underserved communities through the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Roadmap project which includes the development of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act Investment Plan and concludes with

the full update of the State Wildlife Action Plan in 2025.

We are seeking to improve our coordination with DNR and local government urban forestry programs to place a high priority on disadvantaged communities. This effort will also include our Habitats at Home program and our partner's programs. We intend to include support funding to these programs within the RAWA Investment Plan.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Disadvantaged communities within urban or adjacent to industrial areas are being disproportionately by heat island effect, noise, water and air pollution, and continued racial discrimination. A recent study conducted by the University of Washington showed that brown communities reduced their use of outdoors during the Covid 19 Pandemic, whereas Caucasian use increased. We are striving to bring nature into disadvantaged communities that have none and have them secure the benefits that others have been able to enjoy such as clean air and water, less human generated noise, improved natural aesthetics, and the joy of seeing urban biodiversity, enjoying a picnic with family and feeling welcome and safe, and growing strong stewardship and pride within each community.

Target Populations or Communities:

Biodiversity reaches across human constructed boundaries. All Washington communities, lands both public and private, urban or rural, and connections across local, state and federal boundaries are included in this work. This proposal will work across communities and jurisdictions to enhance the protection and recovery of biodiversity. As described above, WDFW will work to prioritize engagement with disadvantaged communities to ensure we protect and restore biodiversity in these spaces so that these communities can become partners in stewardship. We must also be mindful of the benefits and potential negative effects of our actions on disadvantaged communities and are committed to a focus on equity in all of our actions.

Restoring biodiversity in Washington will reap benefits for every Washingtonian, with specific improvements for historically disadvantaged communities. Fish and wildlife hold intrinsic and substantive value for Washington residents and sovereign Tribal nations. They are a significant part of our history, culture, and future. Fish and wildlife feed us, both with nutritional substance and potent inspiration. Their habitats pull pollutants from air and water, absorb noise pollution, reduce heat island effect, and moderate impacts from flooding and droughts—impacts which often are more intense for historically disadvantaged communities. Fish and wildlife and their habitats provide recreational opportunities and important commercial industries that support our economy and society, locally, nationally, and internationally. All combined, these values underpin our biological, social, spiritual, cultural, and economic health.

Ensuring sustainable fish and wildlife opportunities for all

WDFW has a long history of providing fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing opportunities to the public. Such outdoor recreation adds to people's quality of life. Unfortunately, the quality and access to these opportunities, in too many cases, doesn't meet public expectations as our human population grows and competition for land increases. This creates management challenges on public lands and for public resources, while also contributing to conflict among user groups. By turning the tide on biodiversity loss, we will have opportunities for fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing for future generations. This will also support Tribal communities to continue traditions that have depended on fish, wildlife, and natural resources since time immemorial.

Connecting people with nature to enhance conservation and stewardship

National surveys tell us people's connection to nature is changing and even waning, especially in urban centers. WDFW, in coordination with local partners, will improve outreach to youth and young adults, as well as other groups in communities who have traditionally had less access to fish and wildlife-based outdoor recreation and stewardship. Racial minorities, notably, are underrepresented among whom we serve. This perpetuates system disadvantages that rob us of potential employees and diverse perspectives.

By growing the Department's communications, education, and outreach capacity, WDFW will better serve residents who may not have a history of participation in outdoor recreation or stewardship. The Department will help residents connect with nature and learn in their existing places, whether that be at a local park, wildlife area, beach, schoolyard, or apartment patio. These connections can improve habitat or greenspaces in their communities, and support people's physical and mental health. WDFW will also focus on identifying and addressing barriers for learners to connect with nature. One example is to provide grant funding to Title I schools for transportation to experiential learning field trips on public lands or fish hatcheries.

Puget Sound Recovery:

Please see “attachment A-Puget Sound Partnership.”

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

WDFW does not have the ability or authority to achieve the necessary change alone to restore biodiversity in the state. Conservation at this large scale can only happen through collaboration and building new and strengthening old partnerships, including with Tribes and other natural resource agencies. Local, state, federal, Tribal governments, non-governmental and conservation organizations, land managers, farmers, commercial industries, private landowners, hunters, anglers, and others of all ages and backgrounds are needed to cooperate and work toward a more resilient future for fish, wildlife, and people.

This proposal will fill critical knowledge gaps, assist in providing more clear actions/pathways to recovering not just individual species, but to broader ecosystems that biodiversity needs and supports. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Roadmap project will seek to vastly expand public engagement across the state, increasing awareness of the challenges and opportunities which will all feed into the 2025 State Wildlife Action Plan update. The plan update will provide a clear roadmap to successful protection and restoration of biodiversity and the roles of governments, businesses, and residents, as well as scales of actions to contribute to restoring Washington’s biodiversity.

Intergovernmental Connections

State Agencies

- Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Washington State Conservation Commission
- Washington Department of Ecology
- Washington Department of Natural Resources
- Washington State Parks

State Task Forces/Strategies

- Statewide Salmon Recovery Strategy (2021)
- Washington State Southern Resident Orca Task Force (2019)

Federal Agencies

- Bureau of Land Management
- Department of Defense
- National Park Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service

STATE AGENCIES

Overall, state agencies will benefit from this proposal by having more clarity on protecting and restoring biodiversity, guiding actions they can take within their authorities and mandates, supporting their programs and priorities, and improving collaboration and synergies between the work they do and protecting and restoring biodiversity, human health and wellbeing, and cultural and economic health.

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

OSPI supports and empowers students, educators, families, and communities through equitable access to high-quality curriculum, instruction, and supports. This funding request supports OSPI’s Strategic Goals, including providing students with access to challenging coursework, culturally responsive curriculum, and pathways to graduation and beyond that meet their unique interests. OSPI fully supports this funding request to continue partnership with WDFW to develop NGSS-aligned curriculum for elementary school learners.

Washington State Conservation Commission

This funding request supports all strategic priority areas and most of the goals described in the Washington State Conservation Commission 2022-2027 Strategic Plan. Actions funded by this package will help conservation districts (CDs) engage people with voluntary actions that keep air, water, soil, habitats, and farmland healthy for all. CDs are community-based hubs of natural resource expertise. They are staffed and led by locals who understand the need of landscapes and fellow community members that they serve. Each of Washington's 39 counties is represented by at least one conservation district.

Washington Department of Ecology and Washington Conservation Corps (WCC)

Investments in biodiversity will support Ecology's water quantity and quality work, air quality, and help to provide increased awareness of the needs of fish, wildlife, and balance with human needs. In addition, this work will assist natural resources agencies to increase the synergy between our collective mandates, authorities, and actions.

Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

DNR relies on WDFW's fish, wildlife, and habitat expertise to inform their actions, management strategies, and regulatory programs. While they employ their own fish and wildlife expertise, their science and knowledge of species comes from WDFW's work. The species recovery plans developed by WDFW are used to inform DNR's strategies while fulfilling their mandates and responsibilities.

Washington State Parks

This request is consistent with the Washington State Parks 2021-2031 Strategic Plan, with overlap in the plan's strategies under the goals of Resource Protection and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Expanding WDFW capacity will support and enable Parks' work to achieve their goals by collaborating to connect people with nature and to conserve and recover native habitats and wildlife.

Washington State Southern Resident Orca Task Force (2019)

This funding request supports the following goals identified in the final report from the Southern Resident Orca Task Force by providing added oil spill response capacity for WDFW, supporting increased access to prey through habitat restoration benefits, and increasing adherence to laws through enhanced public engagement.

- Increase Chinook salmon abundance.
- Decrease disturbance of and risk to Southern Resident orcas from vessels and noise and increase access to their prey.
- Reduce the exposure of Southern Resident orcas and their prey to contaminants.
- Ensure that funding, information, and accountability mechanisms are in place to support effective implementation.

Statewide Salmon Recovery Strategy (2021)

This funding request supports the following actions identified in the Governor's Salmon Recovery Strategy.

- Protect and restore vital salmon habitat
- Invest in clean water infrastructure for salmon and people
- Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to historical habitat
- Build climate resiliency
- Enhance commitments and coordination across agencies and programs
- Strengthen science, monitoring, and accountability

FEDERAL AGENCIES

Federal agencies are generally directed by federal law and congressional budgets. They all have their own fish and wildlife expertise and rely on our federal counterparts of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or NOAA Fisheries to guide their actions and management strategies on federally managed public lands. That stated, all these entities have acknowledged and depend heavily on WDFW's local expertise and our ability to deliver protection and recovery actions on non-federal lands and provide technical assistance to their experts to ensure synergy between federal and non-federal land management.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

While BLM's land holdings in Washington are small relative to other western states, their investments and collaboration in shrubsteppe habitats are important and significant. BLM lands are adjacent to WDFW wildlife areas where listed species recovery and habitat restoration are a shared priority. BLM participates in WDFW's effort to develop a shrubsteppe conservation strategy under the Washington Shrubsteppe Restoration and Resiliency Initiative (WSRRI). In addition, WDFW collaborates heavily with the BLM and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Interagency Special Status/Sensitive Species Program (ISSSSP) to identify and implement conservation action priorities for shared ISSSSP species and WDFW Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN).

Department of Defense (DOD)

Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) in Western Washington and Yakima Training Center (YTC) in Eastern Washington provide significant habitat and host populations of at-risk species, including several ESA-listed species. This WDFW funding request advances shared priorities with DOD outlined in the JBLM Sentinel Landscape Implementation Plan and both the JBLM and YTC Integrated Natural Resource Management Plans (INRMPs). Expanding WDFW capacity to recover listed species and keep at-risk species from being listed under the ESA will directly benefit DOD and their mission to train soldiers. Improvements in species status can facilitate the reducing or precluding of regulatory restrictions.

National Park Service (NPS)

WDFW collaborates often with NPS in wildlife management. Expanding WDFW capacity and investment in SGCN protection and recovery will advance shared goals with NPS. Examples of past collaborations include co-leadership of fisher reintroduction and responding to the threat of white-nose syndrome in bats.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA)

WDFW staff deliver Farm Bill incentives to private landowners on the ground and collaborate directly with NRCS and FSA to ensure smooth transfer of technical assistance.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

This funding request advances shared priorities with USFWS outlined in the Washington Ecological Services 2022-2026 Strategic Plan including protecting, restoring, sustaining, and enhancing healthy ecosystem function to support recovery of listed species, prevent future listings, and ensure a robust and resilient biotic community. The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Implementation Plan 2022-2026 identifies several Washington focus areas where their objective is to engage private landowners and other partners to develop and implement habitat restoration projects to support species conservation, habitat connectivity, and resilient ecosystems. This funding also supports a shared WDFW and USFWS position to support Lamprey recovery and positions to support the Bull Trout five-year status review and implementation of the Bull Trout recovery plan.

U.S. Forest Service (USFS)

USFS is a party to Washington's Shared Stewardship and Good Neighbor partnerships and agreements designed to increase collaboration, coordination, and project implementation on state and federally managed forest lands. National Forests are a significant land holder in Washington and WDFW collaborates heavily with USFS biologists in wildlife management on those lands. For example, USFS has been a strong collaborator in recovery and conservation actions for fisher, wolverine, bats, Northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, lynx, Oregon spotted frog, Taylor's checkerspot butterfly, bumble bees, and many other SGCN. In addition, WDFW collaborates with USFWS and BLM Interagency Special Status/Sensitive Species Program (ISSSSP) to identify and implement conservation action priorities for ISSSSP species and WDFW Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN).

Stakeholder Response:

Non-governmental stakeholder groups that we anticipate as supporters for this proposal include:

Academia

WDFW partners with academia to conduct research, gather information, and study disease. This proposal will build on current levels of effort which will expand our work with colleges and universities. This expansion will also support fish, wildlife, habitat, planning, engineering, and social science students that are our future conservation leaders. We will continue to share more detailed information about this proposal and garner feedback to improve it as it moves through the legislative system.

Conservation Organizations

WDFW and Washington state are extremely fortunate to have a wealth of conservation organizations, each filling a unique local, state, or federal conservation niche. Washington's biodiversity and outdoor recreational opportunities depend on these conservation organizations. Many of these organizations rely on WDFW's scientific knowledge, technical assistance, protection and recovery authorities, and staff engagement to support their efforts. For years, many of these organizations have advocated for WDFW to have the resources to do more on behalf of protecting and supporting their efforts to recover biodiversity and support commercial and recreational needs and opportunities in Washington state. This proposal will also further our support of our conservation partners, including pass-through funding that supports their local conservation actions. We will continue to share more detailed information about this proposal and garner feedback to improve it as it moves through the legislative system.

Environmental Education

WDFW has rekindled and created new partnerships and connections over the last two years with the environmental education community in Washington, including Columbia Springs, E3 Washington, North American Association of Environmental Education, Pacific Education Institute, Educational Service Districts, and others. Through these experiences, we have learned more about the challenges facing educators in teaching conservation education in formal and informal settings. This proposal will support local educators and organization by enhancing regional conservation education capacity around the state. We will continue to share more detailed information about this proposal and garner feedback to improve it as it moves through the legislative system.

Industry Groups

Industries can often be in different places around the protection and restoration of biodiversity. Some focus on quick fixes such as hatchery production and fisheries allocations challenges, whereas others can be directly impacted by "how" conservation is implemented. This proposal will provide a much clearer picture of where biodiversity, species populations, and trends, and what actions must be taken to protect and restore biodiversity. This clarity can better inform and/or reduce uncertainty and improve the effectiveness of the actions to achieve intended outcomes. The fact that biodiversity and nature support a tremendous amount of the GDP may provide more motivation for shared need for protecting and restoring biodiversity and allow for improved innovation on how to do this while supporting healthy industries in Washington. We will continue to share more detailed information about this proposal and garner feedback to improve it as it moves through the legislative system.

Outdoor Organizations with Focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

This proposal would help the Department reach diverse audiences around the state by providing capacity to strengthen existing and create new relationships with outdoor organizations that have special focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. WDFW has worked with Latino Outdoors, Team Naturaleza, Washington Outdoor Women, Refuge Outdoor Festival, and others in the past, and intends to build on these relationships and connect with more organizations. We will continue to share more detailed information about this proposal and garner feedback to improve it as it moves through the legislative system.

Tribal Partners

Tribes are co-managers of fisheries and some hunting. While many tribes are currently focused on riparian habitat protection and regulation or fish reintroduction, they also share our understanding of healthy ecosystems and the need to recover Washington's biodiversity. For example, the Yakama Nation and Colville Confederated Tribes are heavily invested in the recovery of shrubsteppe habitats and wildlife. Tribal cultures, health and wellbeing, and economies depend upon a healthy nature. We will continue to share more detailed information about this proposal and garner feedback to improve it as it moves through the legislative system.

WDFW Advisory Groups

WDFW advisory groups consist of diverse interests. Overall, there is a general understanding of the importance of biodiversity and how this proposal will vastly improve our collective ability to protect and restore biodiversity. Each advisory group has varied focus on conservation. Those with more conservation, fish, and hunting representatives tend to provide more support for WDFW and would support this proposal. We will continue to share more detailed information about this proposal and garner feedback to improve it as it moves through the legislative system.

Zoos and Aquaria

Zoos and aquaria are critical protection and recovery partners, and several organizations in Washington have partnered with WDFW to support captive rearing programs for at-risk wildlife. These programs allow us to release listed species back into the wild and bolster species populations. Zoos and aquaria are also tremendous advocates and effective in public awareness and education around biodiversity challenges. These organizations will benefit from this proposal as we expand recovery plan development and implementation and rely on their assistance for reintroductions and coordinated public engagement and education opportunities. We will continue to share more detailed information about this proposal and garner feedback to improve it as it moves through the legislative system.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

RCW 77.04.012 is the legislative mandate of WDFW and serves as the foundation for the Department’s mission: “To preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities.”

This funding proposal aims to implement recommended actions from the Washington Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, which have not been adequately funded for the last 15 years.

Reference Documents

- [268_Species_2022.pdf](#)
- [Appendix – Detailed Biodiversity Actions.docx](#)
- [Attachment A - Puget Sound Partnership.docx](#)
- [Attachment B. SGCN by ecoregion.docx](#)
- [Attachment C. Example SGCN species for data collection.docx](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$9,200	\$9,918	\$19,118	\$9,918	\$9,918	\$19,836
Obj. B	\$3,551	\$3,833	\$7,384	\$3,833	\$3,833	\$7,666
Obj. C	\$165	\$290	\$455	\$290	\$290	\$580
Obj. E	\$3,549	\$3,594	\$7,143	\$3,594	\$3,594	\$7,188
Obj. G	\$249	\$249	\$498	\$249	\$249	\$498
Obj. J	\$390	\$90	\$480	\$90	\$90	\$180
Obj. N	\$460	\$460	\$920	\$460	\$460	\$920
Obj. T	\$5,603	\$5,995	\$11,598	\$5,995	\$5,995	\$11,990

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Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) operates dozens of fish hatcheries around the state. Maintaining facilities and infrastructure will reduce maintenance problems by focusing on prevention rather than cure, resulting in significant cost savings. Well-maintained facilities ensure day-to-day operations are efficient and cost effective; minimize workplace hazards for staff and the public; and mitigate production disruptions and potential catastrophic loss of state resources, such as a recent equipment failure that resulted in the loss of 5 million fish. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	8.4	8.7	8.55	8.7	8.7	8.7
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$1,752	\$1,790	\$3,542	\$1,790	\$1,790	\$3,580
Total Expenditures	\$1,752	\$1,790	\$3,542	\$1,790	\$1,790	\$3,580

Decision Package Description

Our ability to adequately maintain and repair critical hatchery facilities and infrastructure is entirely dependent upon the availability of sufficient resources including staffing, materials, tools, vehicles, and equipment. Consistent, timely, and proper maintenance and repair of infrastructure enables operations to continue effectively and efficiently and extends the useful life of essential components. Vital infrastructure components needing immediate attention include a reliable supply of water; the ability to quickly repair and replace essential equipment and electrical services; repairs to rearing ponds to avoid loss of fish; a safe and hazard-free chemical (formalin) storage and dispensing system; and accurate mapping of all underground and above ground infrastructure and utility systems.

Current staffing, equipment, and material resources are insufficient to sustain an adequate maintenance program of critical hatchery infrastructure. Many of our hatcheries are well over 50 years old and are rapidly degrading. Current maintenance resources are barely keeping up with urgent and emergency work. It is only a matter of time before there may be a catastrophic fish loss. To mitigate the risk, additional maintenance support resources are needed to meet the challenges of operating old and rapidly deteriorating facilities.

Funding is needed to hire additional staff FTEs, equipment, and material inventory to meet these ever-growing maintenance obligations.

Water Supply

Water is the “life blood” of hatchery production. This proposal will allow us to replace identified failing piping that is beyond its useful life and using limited maintenance/repair funding to stay functional. Pipe replacement funding does not rise to a level to justify a capital project until there is a catastrophic failure, which puts hatchery fish at risk.

Equipment Replacement

Maintaining and retrofitting pumps, emergency generators and water flow alarms is a constant preventative maintenance requirement to avoid production failures.

Facility Sustainment

Routine scheduled preventative maintenance ensures that infrastructure components are operating properly, and early detection is critical to avoid urgent and emergency repairs.

Asphalt Concrete and Pond Sealant Repairs

Sealing and maintaining asphalt fish rearing ponds will extend the life cycle of the product by two or three times depending on the product, sealant, and maintenance. By doubling the lifecycle of our concrete and asphalt infrastructure, we will save significant staff time and replacement costs over the strategic plan period.

Electrical Upgrades

A dedicated electrical budget is needed to address immediate concerns and to fund future efforts. Replacing old electrical panels and wiring mitigates fires and equipment malfunctions due to improper voltage. This includes minor efforts such as installing GFCI outlets and complete facility rewiring efforts. After all facilities and residences are updated (mitigation efforts), funding would shift to assist in other effort areas (running electrical to standalone structures, burying lines, assisting network updates, retrofitting energy efficient solutions, etc.).

Formalin System Maintenance

The formalin distribution systems installed in hatcheries require consistent and ongoing maintenance. Formalin is used to promote fish health by disease prevention. The chemicals used in formalin are considered a hazardous substance and proper maintenance ensures worker safety.

Infrastructure Drawings and Documents

It is necessary to update hatchery complex facility and infrastructure as-built drawings. Updated plans are important to prevent potential safety issues and limiting unforeseen conditions during future construction.

Alternatives explored:

The only other option is to continue with the status quo. Unfortunately, status quo “kicks the problem down the road” to future years, increasing the odds of a catastrophic failure and loss of fish. A recent emergency generator failure resulted in a loss of 5 million fish at a hatchery. The cause of the equipment failure may very well have been avoided if routine testing and preventative maintenance had been able to occur.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This is an expansion of existing underfunded maintenance and repair activities focused on critical hatchery facilities and infrastructure. Current funding (\$3.0 M per BN) is insufficient to make any progress on addressing the maintenance and repair backlog at the agency's hatcheries. Properly planned maintenance lessens the likelihood of critical equipment failing, maintains a higher safety level for staff and helps avoid large and costly repairs down the road. Overall, a properly functioning maintenance program ensures operational disruptions are kept to a minimum.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, for 8.4 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions total \$774,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2024 and 8.7 FTE positions total \$801,000 in FY 2025 and ongoing. Public Works Contract support, object C, include \$100,000 per year for sub-contracted help on sealing of asphalt.

Goods and services, object E, include \$6,000 per FTE per year, for WDFW standard costs which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year. \$20,000 is needed for additional materials for water supply repairs. \$50,000 is needed for equipment parts and fuel for department operated heavy equipment. \$50,000 is required for formalin systems materials and specialized equipment. \$75,000 is needed for additional materials required to complete repairs.

Travel costs, object G, totals \$46,000 per year for mileage, hotel, and per diem associated with maintaining facilities statewide.

Equipment and materials costs, object J, totals \$169,000 per year for large equipment, specialized tools and materials associated with maintenance at statewide facilities.

An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classification and the associated work are as follows:

0.3 FTE Contracts Specialist 3, for contract administration support for necessary public works contracts.

0.5 FTE Carpenter Lead, to provide carpentry expertise as needed for maintenance activities.

1.6 FTE Electrician, to provide electrical expertise as needed for maintenance activities.

1.0 FTE Construction and Maintenance Supervisor, to provide supervision as needed for maintenance activities.

0.5 Engineering Aide 3, to provide drafting services as needed for maintenance activities.

0.4 FTE Environmental Engineer 2, to provide engineering and project management expertise as needed for maintenance activities. This increases to 0.5 FTE in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing due to difficulties of filling specialized staff.

0.2 FTE Control Technician, to provide alarms expertise as needed for maintenance activities.

0.3 FTE Administrative Assistant 2, to provide admin and logistics support as needed for maintenance activities. This increased to 0.5 FTE in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing due to focusing hiring efforts on direct maintenance capacity first.

3.6 FTE Maintenance Mechanic 2, to provide piping and pump expertise as needed for maintenance activities.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve two Results Washington goals: 1) Prosperous Economy; and 2) Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment. This proposal is fundamental for the Department to continue hatchery operations, preventing any possible fish production disruptions, loss of ESA listed stock, Southern Resident Killer Whale prey production, and supporting a vibrant recreational and commercial fishing industry.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This decision package directly supports the Department's 25-Year Strategic Plan strategy to "Proactively address conservation challenges", by maintaining the statewide hatchery production goals and minimizing the risk for infrastructure failure and catastrophic loss of fish. This proposal also aligns with the strategy to "Engage communities through recreation and stewardship", by again maintaining statewide hatchery production goals to sustain healthy fish and wildlife populations, supporting the recreational and commercial fishing industries.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Produce Hatchery Fish, \$994,000 State General Fund and 4.6 FTE in fiscal year 2024 and \$1,032,000 and 4.9 FTE in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing.

This package supports inventory item "Produce Hatchery Fish" and applicable support strategy:

- Build and maintain hatcheries

Business Management & Obligations, for \$758,000 and 3.8 FTE in fiscal year 2024 for applicable support strategy:

- Build and maintain facilities

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the agency's ability to achieve the following Performance Objectives:

- Hatchery programs in compliance with ESA
- Salmon hatchery recommendations
- Fisheries in compliance with harvest protection goals
- Hatchery programs in compliance with ESA

Maintaining and updating old and deteriorating hatchery facilities is the primary goal of this decision package and this funding will ensure the following direct outcomes:

Water Supply

No hatchery fish loss due to pipe blockage/drainage events by the end of 25-27BN.

Equipment Replacement

All hatcheries maintain modern and functioning alarm and monitoring systems to ensure water delivery occurs to prevent fish loss.

Facility Sustainment

Standard maintenance will be conducted on all agency infrastructure to ensure proper functioning through useful life.

Asphalt Concrete and Pond Sealant Repairs

Sealing and maintenance will extend the life cycle of the product by two or three times depending on the product, sealant, and maintenance. By doubling the lifecycle of our concrete and asphalt infrastructure, we will save significant staff time and replacement costs over the strategic plan period.

Electrical Upgrades

All electrical boxes will be reviewed and replaced if found to be a stab lock. Safety concerns of old-building electrical (non-standard lighting voltage, knob-and-tube, brittle cable, etc.) will be replaced.

Formalin System Maintenance

The formalin system investments made by the agency receive a dedicated maintenance budget to ensure proper amounts of formalin are distributed to keep fish healthy.

Infrastructure Drawings and Documents

All hatchery facilities have completed as-built drawings of facilities and infrastructure.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain these functions to ensure there is not degradation services to the communities we serve. During budget development the Department shared a preliminary briefing on budget proposals with Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

It is expected that there are few, if any, disproportionate impacts from this proposal. However, if this proposal does not receive funding, there could be disproportionate impacts to those who rely on hatchery fish for their subsistence, economic welfare, and recreation if hatchery fish become ill and WDFW does not have enough staff to thoroughly address the issue. When that happens, there are fewer fish available for tribal fishing, along with commercial and recreational fishing. Funding this proposal will help ensure tribal treaty rights, subsistence fishing, and protect treaty resources.

Target Populations or Communities:

Rural and geographically isolated communities in Washington will significantly benefit from the economic opportunities in commercial fishing. Recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state contribute significant revenue to rural businesses. Tribal fisheries will benefit from the continued production of healthy hatchery fish from well-maintained facilities.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery by supporting continued maintenance and operation of WDFW hatcheries to maintain fish production and limit mortality to support salmon recovery and harvest. This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID# 205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity, continue to implement increased state and tribal hatchery production to support prey availability for Southern Resident Orca, and indirectly aligned with Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by supporting WDFW's fish hatchery production by ensuring hatchery infrastructure is maintained to ensure day-to-day operations are efficient and cost effective, minimize workplace hazards for staff and the public; and mitigating production disruptions for loss of fish.

This decision package fulfills the Secondary Criteria: Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by increasing or maintaining WDFW's hatchery salmon production through increased infrastructure maintenance and safety. Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce Recommendation 6 significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, and Salmon Strategy Recommendation 5 More effectively integrate salmon recovery into harvest, hatcheries and hydropower.

This decision package is necessary to support the ongoing Fisheries and Hatcheries Science Management program which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies: 15 Salmon Recovery, 17 Responsible Boating, 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship, 24 – Cultural Practices and Local Foods, 25 Economic Benefits, and 26 Human Health.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

WDFW hatchery production levels are a crucial element of fisheries co-management with tribes, in addition to collaborating and working with community partners to reach Department conservation principles. We anticipate that our partners will be supportive of this request. Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission is also in support of measures taken to maintain our critical infrastructure to sustain fish health.

Stakeholder Response:

Fishing constituents will be supportive of maintenance efforts to sustain salmon and steelhead production levels. WDFW risks losing the support of the recreational and commercial fishers if Hatcheries operate across the state, providing recreational, and commercial fishing opportunities for residents, tourists, and conservation groups. We anticipate support for this request from our stakeholders.

State Facilities Impacts:

The new staff will have an assigned duty station at the Lacey Construction Shop and at 600 Capitol Way N, Olympia. It is anticipated that positions can be absorbed into existing facilities, particularly with the advancement of agencywide telework options.

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$547	\$566	\$1,113	\$566	\$566	\$1,132
Obj. B	\$227	\$235	\$462	\$235	\$235	\$470
Obj. C	\$100	\$100	\$200	\$100	\$100	\$200
Obj. E	\$266	\$267	\$533	\$267	\$267	\$534
Obj. G	\$46	\$46	\$92	\$46	\$46	\$92
Obj. J	\$169	\$169	\$338	\$169	\$169	\$338
Obj. T	\$397	\$407	\$804	\$407	\$407	\$814

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Agency Recommendation Summary

Fishways and fish screens have been required to provide passage for migrating fish in Washington since the 1890s. Hundreds of state, federal, and private fishways and fish screens provide passage for millions of migratory fish. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) owns 100 fishways that provide access to 1,768 miles of spawning and rearing habitat, and over 100 fish screens that protect downstream migrating fish, many of which need repairs. This funding request reestablishes operation and maintenance capacity for state fish passage facilities and technical assistance for owners of passage infrastructure to prevent fish mortality during migration. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$741	\$741	\$1,482	\$741	\$741	\$1,482
Total Expenditures	\$741	\$741	\$1,482	\$741	\$741	\$1,482

Decision Package Description

A fishway is any structure or modification to a natural or artificial structure built for the purpose of fish passage. A common type of fishway is a fish ladder. Rivers and streams have variable flows and transport woody debris and sediment, and regular maintenance of fish passage infrastructure is necessary to ensure fish are protected. There are hundreds of fishways, of various ownerships, in the state. Many of these fishways were built in the 1950s to pass migrating salmon and steelhead upstream of human-made barriers, particularly storage and diversion dams.

Fishways were also historically constructed to assist with fish passage around natural barriers, waterfalls, and rapids, to expand spawning and rearing habitat in the interest of increasing fish populations. When functioning properly, these fishways afford salmon, steelhead, resident/sea-run trout, native char, and lamprey access to over 3,000 miles of spawning and rearing habitat that produce many tens of millions of wild salmon and steelhead fry.

WDFW owns 100 fishways statewide, many of which are located at Department hatcheries (WDFW Attachment MT, Figure 1), irrigation pump stations at wildlife areas, and at a variety of state-owned lakes managed for recreational fishing. Most are now over 70 years old and are in such a state of disrepair that many are now obstacles to fish passage (WDFW Attachment MT, Figures 2 & 3) with the worst fishways potentially acting as fatal traps for migrating fish. Lack of maintenance can result in more costly repairs or the need for replacement. In the past, WDFW's Habitat Program inspected and maintained fishways statewide using a fishway maintenance team. During those inspections, typically 25% of inspected fishways were found to be barriers to fish passage requiring varying levels of adjustment, maintenance, or repair by the maintenance team. In some extreme cases, replacement was necessary. The WDFW fishway maintenance team was successful in bringing most of the state's fishways into compliance prior to the fall adult salmon return. WDFW staff also provided notice and technical assistance to owners of non-state, non-compliant fish screens. Due to past budget cuts, funding was withdrawn from the program and the fishway team was disbanded.

Many populations of salmon and steelhead are currently listed as threatened or "endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). The loss of spawning and rearing habitat, or access to it, is one of the primary limiting factors in recovering these species. We have a legal and ethical responsibility to ensure that state-owned fishways are maintained and remain passable and function as designed.

It is important to note that providing safe downstream migration for juvenile salmon and steelhead smolts is equally, if not more important, than providing for upstream adult fish passage. During their downstream migration to the Pacific Ocean, salmonid smolts are vulnerable to entrainment into pump and gravity water diversion structures.

Funding is needed to inventory and assess the condition of WDFW's passage and screening infrastructure and reconstruct the program needed to maintain and operate fishways and screens to protect state investments in salmon and steelhead recovery efforts. Without investment in passage and screening, the many millions of state and federal dollars dedicated to salmon recovery is undermined by the loss of juvenile salmon and steelhead into water intake structures that have not been maintained or are out of criteria. A single diversion structure that's out of criteria

and located in the lower reaches of a large river system with millions of out-migrating salmonids can result in many tens, or hundreds of thousands of fish mortalities.

If supported, this decision package would provide WDFW the capacity to keep our fishways and hatchery screens appropriately maintained and functioning as designed to help recover our state's fish stocks and those wildlife species that depend on them for prey. Benefits range from transparent accountability for our infrastructure, to affecting improved fish production which could help recover the Southern Resident killer whale population in the Puget Sound.

Proposed Solution

WDFW proposes to re-establish the WDFW "Fish Passage Maintenance Team" within the Habitat Program's Fish Passage and Screening Division. This team will provide the capacity to:

- Inventory, assess, maintain, repair, and operate WDFW-owned fish passage structures to ensure they meet state and federal criteria and protect fish during their migration from and to headwater spawning and rearing habitats.
- Provide technical assistance to fishway and fish screen owners to protect state investments in wild salmon and steelhead recovery, and protect hatchery produced fish during emigration.
- Provide specialized internal technical assistance to WDFW's Capital & Asset Management Program staff and Fish Program staff on passage and screening projects.
- Conduct research and development on new passage and screening designs and criteria for new applications, and to protect all fish species and life history stages other than salmonids (i.e., design fishways and screens to protect lamprey, shellfish, and other fish life, tide gate passage designs, etc.).

Best Option

Specialized expertise, training, and capacity are required to inspect and repair fish screens and fishways. Past WDFW efforts to allocate this work to regional enforcement officers and regional biologists had minimal impact on the state of our fishways due to lack of skills, equipment, training, and capacity. Private landowners and diversion owners do not always maintain their diversions or do not have required knowledge, equipment, experience, or expertise to do so. A dedicated Fish Passage Maintenance Team to provide fishway and screen inspection and repair would have the most success in protecting fish life at these structures.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

WDFW does not have a current assessment of fish passage infrastructure condition or repair or replacement costs. However, once state passage and screening facilities are inventoried and the structures have been assessed, it is expected that some old structures will need significant repair or replacement.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, for 5.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions total \$425,000 per fiscal year beginning in 2024 and ongoing. Goods and services, object E, includes \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year. Professional Service Contract, object C, totals \$100,000 each fiscal year, beginning in 2024. This expense is for equipment, materials, and contract service work necessary for screen and fishway maintenance and repair. Due to the extended time without maintenance, many structures have a backlog of maintenance needs and will require extensive service, repair, and part replacement. Head gates are corroded or bent, gravel/debris needs to be vacuumed or excavated from fishways, concrete repairs are needed, electric motors need repair, screen drums require service repair, corrosion resistant painting is needed, and crane or heavy equipment services are needed to remove and replace heavy parts. An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% (\$186,000) is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classifications and the associated work for 5.0 FTE are as follows:

1.0 FISH & WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST 2 serves as lead biologist - technical lead for assessing fish life, and life history stages present at passage and screening facilities at various times of the year and how passage and screening infrastructure may affect them and how impacts may be mitigated. Ensures that fish, biology, ecology, and behavior is adequately integrated into passage and screening project designs and operation.

2.0 SCIENTIFIC TECHNICIAN 2 serve as the statewide fish passage and screening technicians for assessing, evaluating, maintaining, and repairing, passage and screening infrastructure on all state-owned facilities and lands. Ensures that state facilities are well maintained and meet state and federal fish passage criteria to ensure protection of fish life during up and downstream migration.

2.0 MAINTENANCE MECHANIC 3 provide regular inspection, adjustment, operation, maintenance, and repair of fish passage and screening infrastructure statewide.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve two of the Governor's Results Washington goals: 1) Prosperous Economy; and 2) Sustainable Energy and Clean Environment, by improving the protection of migratory fish through Washington's waterways.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This package supports two strategies in WDFW's 25-Year Strategic Plan: 1) Proactively address conservation challenges; and 2) Engage communities through recreation and stewardship.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Preserve and Restore Aquatic Habitat and Species, 5.0 FTE, \$741,000 each fiscal year ongoing, State General Fund.

This package supports the activity inventory item "Preserve and Restore Aquatic Habitat and Species" and applicable support strategy:

- Ensure fish survivability by removing stream barriers and appropriately addressing water diversions

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Miles of fish habitat opened
- Threatened and endangered species population increases

The Fish Passage Maintenance Team would inspect and assess all 100 WDFW-owned fishways and screens on a regular schedule, multiple times per year. The team would make all adjustments and perform minor repair work as needed to ensure fish passage structures meet operating criteria and design goals. By doing so, all 1,768 miles of valuable habitat above these fish passage structures will be accessible for native salmon and resident fish species. Another important benefit of routine maintenance activities will be the identification of problems at early stages which the team will be able to address with little financial impact rather than allowing the problems to worsen over time and require more expensive corrections.

Fish screen maintenance would ensure that fish rearing pond outlet structures and screens at hatcheries are regularly inspected and properly maintained to preclude reared fish from inadvertently escaping facilities as has recently occurred. This will protect the Department's investments in hatchery produced fish. The team would assist in the design and development of Capital Budget requests for larger repairs or replacement projects. The team would ensure that WDFW fish passage structures safely pass and protect fish as designed, and that screens preclude entrainment of juvenile fish into water diversions.

Project milestones will include conducting inspections of all WDFW fish passage infrastructure, creation of a database of current condition of structures, assess needed maintenance and repairs, prioritize repairs and replacements, and provide needed repairs to fish passage structures to ensure they are within operating criteria. Staff would also conduct mid-season inspections and repairs after major flow/flood events for fishways with chronic problems.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

WDFW briefed the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) finance committee and commissioners on the Department's 2023-2025 budget requests. Tribal co-managers are supportive of fish passage maintenance because the infrastructure is critical in providing fish access to habitat. This request is essential to protecting Washington's investment in wild and hatchery fish production by ensuring those juvenile salmonids produced are not then lost into unscreened water diversion structures and can safely emigrate to the ocean.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

WDFW understands there is still work to be done to address disproportional access issues to marginalized communities. This funding request is essential to ensure overall fish numbers do not decrease, and their distribution throughout state waters is maintained or restored. The Department intends a continued dialogue to understand and address inequities stemming from the fish availability and access issues that potentially widen disparities across systemically marginalized communities.

Target Populations or Communities:

According to the Washington State Department of Health, access to fish and wildlife observation opportunities and outdoor recreation spaces is an important component of health equity. Monitoring and sustaining anadromous fish throughout their range of historic distribution are integral components of preserving economic and cultural practices for Washington residents and native tribes.

Improving fish passage infrastructure directly benefits the availability of salmon to commercial and recreational fisheries and tribal communities in Washington. Additionally, freshwater, and marine fisheries provide economic benefits to rural Washington communities where recreational and residential trout and salmon fishing often occurs.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by ensuring that harvest and hatchery adaptive management is successful by providing the capacity to maintain and improve 1768 miles of salmon habitat in fish passage structures so that reared fish are not lost. This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID#205)

Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca, by implementing key opportunity continue to implement best practices for hatchery management, including developing a joint co-manager hatchery policy, by ensuring that hatchery adaptive management is successful by providing the capacity to maintain and improve fish screens and rearing facilities.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 152) Inventory and assess all fish passage barriers (culverts, dams, etc.). Prioritize, sequence, and implement fish passage barrier correction or removal in watersheds. by ensuring that harvest and hatchery adaptive management is successful by providing the capacity to maintain and improve 1768 miles of salmon habitat in fish passage structures, including cases where the fish passage structures themselves are in disrepair and are a barrier themselves so that reared fish are not lost. Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6: Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, and This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon strategy recommendations 1 Protect and restore vital salmon habitat, 3 Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to their historical habitat, and 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision packages fulfills the SECONDARY CRITERIA Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by providing technical support to adaptively manage salmon habitat and recovery through fishway maintenance and hatchery rearing capacity.

This decision package is necessary to support ongoing Fishery and Hatchery Science program which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies: 15: salmon recovery, 17, responsible boating, 22 Outdoor recreation and stewardship, 24 cultural practices and local foods, 25 economic benefits. This decision package is necessary to support ongoing Fish Passage program which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies: 6-Fish passage barriers, 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery, and 20: climate adaptation resilience.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

There historically has been near unanimous and broad-based support by tribal co-managers and the sport and commercial fisheries communities for maintenance of fish passage (fishways and fish ladders) and fish screening infrastructure to ensure that fish have access to and from headwater spawning and rearing habitats to maintain and restore production potential of wild fish, particularly salmon and steelhead.

There is also unanimous support for protecting Washington’s investment in wild and hatchery fish production, by ensuring those juvenile salmonids produced are not then lost into unscreened water diversion structures and can safely emigrate to the ocean. Tribal support is expected from the 29 federally recognized tribes and in particular the 21 Stevens Treaty tribal nations who, by treaty, are guaranteed half of the harvestable Salmon. The Eastern Washington tribes have all been supportive, particularly the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

Stakeholder Response:

Most stakeholders are expected to support including the agricultural community.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

Reference Documents

[WDFW MT Attachment.pdf](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$295	\$295	\$590	\$295	\$295	\$590
Obj. B	\$130	\$130	\$260	\$130	\$130	\$260
Obj. C	\$100	\$100	\$200	\$100	\$100	\$200
Obj. E	\$30	\$30	\$60	\$30	\$30	\$60
Obj. T	\$186	\$186	\$372	\$186	\$186	\$372

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

As Washington’s population continues to grow, human-wildlife interactions and conflicts increase. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) seeks to build capacity by consolidating and expanding its response to conflicts. Wildlife conflict specialists will be available daily to address crop damage and dangerous wildlife interactions, while increasing preventative education and outreach and freeing enforcement officer time for other priority duties. Consolidation and improved response will reduce agriculture and livestock producer frustrations, decrease costly claims for damage payments, and allow for a seamless response and follow-through to dangerous wildlife conflicts including human-black bear and human-cougar. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	21.5	45.0	33.25	45.0	45.0	45.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$3,262	\$6,637	\$9,899	\$6,557	\$6,557	\$13,114
Total Expenditures	\$3,262	\$6,637	\$9,899	\$6,557	\$6,557	\$13,114

Decision Package Description

The Problem:

Human population growth and urbanization of wildland habitats are causing increased human-wildlife conflicts. Crop losses from deer and elk, human safety concerns, and livestock losses from bears, cougars, and wolves are the Department’s primary concern. Trends in Washington’s population growth indicate that these problems are likely to continue to increase in the future.

The WDFW Enforcement Program expends a significant amount of time and resources in responding to and handling dangerous wildlife related calls, particularly responses to human-black bear and human-cougar conflicts. However, most of these conflicts do not require a certified law enforcement officer to handle the situation, so this model is not the most efficient use of Department resources.

The Department has a Wildlife Conflict Section of trained Wildlife Program staff that currently works on deer and elk damage, bear timber damage, wolf conflicts, and other less dangerous or urban human wildlife conflict responses. In addition, conflict specialists work with landowners on preventative measures, engage local communities, and visit on-site to provide proactive information to limit negative wildlife interactions. These staff assist Enforcement with most cougar and bear-related conflict incidents, are trained to handle those situations, and with adequate increased staffing levels, can assume the response to most of these types of incidents without Enforcement assistance. With more conflict specialists, the agency will have the opportunity to increase proactive and preemptive measures to potentially decrease human-wildlife conflicts.

Current wildlife conflict staffing levels within the Wildlife Program are, at times, unable to provide an adequate response to conflicts, such as elk and deer commercial damage, which statutorily requires a response (Chapter RCW 77.36), and for other wildlife conflicts within their existing scope of duties.

Current damage claims for payment under investigation for fiscal year (FY) 2022 total approximately \$850,000 in loss value. However, the statutory annual funding limit for damage payment is \$150,000 per FY for all claims combined. Those not paid in a FY must wait for subsequent FYs to be next in line for repayment. Contributing to these high costs is inadequate conflict staffing levels to respond in a timely and consistent manner to these conflicts. Current staffing only covers a typical 8-5, M-F work week. All weekend calls including non-dangerous wildlife response calls must wait for the next regular state business workday for a response. This increases the risk of damage and frustrations of commercial agriculture and livestock producers.

Our Solution:

With the funding in this request, the Department can solve several existing human-wildlife conflict response issues at once. This proposal moves most dangerous wildlife conflict responses from the Enforcement Program into the Wildlife Program for more effective use of resources and staff. This decision package helps ensure adequate response times and service coverage and adds seven-day-per-week response by Wildlife Conflict Specialists, when at full capacity.

This decision package will provide better geographic distribution of staff and allow a more effective response than the 15 wildlife conflict staff currently trying to serve 39 counties. The requested increase in staff is needed to effectively cover the entire state, reduce response times for dangerous wildlife interactions, and provide expanded response to statutorily required actions (e.g., livestock depredation, and deer and elk damage commercial crop damage investigations) by Wildlife Conflict Specialists. Moving all wildlife conflict primary response, including bear and cougar conflict, into the Wildlife Program will also align the work under one program for administrative oversight and free up Enforcement Program officer time to perform law enforcement-specific responsibilities.

The Department envisions moving administration of wildlife conflict response into a new administrative division in the Wildlife Program focused on landowner assistance. This revised structure will provide for better planning, coordination, and implementation of initiatives to improve response to human-wildlife conflicts. Staffing associated with this funding proposal will allow the Department to improve and expand our capability to handle increasing human-wildlife conflicts from Washington's increasing human population.

Alternatives explored:

The Department considered maintaining the status quo; however, the current status is unsustainable and lacks the expanded response we need for existing and anticipated human-wildlife conflict issues. Status quo also does not address the challenges that exist because of the agency's existing bifurcated administrative construct between the Enforcement and Wildlife Programs, which causes inefficiencies and reduced effectiveness. In addition, Enforcement does not have the capacity to continue with the upward trending dangerous predatory wildlife conflict response while also addressing increased law enforcement needs.

The Department also looked at simply moving wildlife conflict fully to the Wildlife Program without added staff. However, without added staff, the public would experience an unacceptable loss of even the current service levels resulting in drastically increased response times, and ultimately increased risk of dangerous or financially costly human-wildlife interactions.

Neither of these two options help the agency meet the public need for expanded response to escalating livestock and deer and elk commercial crop damage complaints, including needing to increase specialist response to daily response. This current shortfall in staffing and coverage adds to the frustration of landowners and can result in increased costs for statutorily required payments for crop and livestock damages.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This decision package is an expansion of an existing and ongoing initiative. It brings together earlier efforts at expanding wildlife conflict into the Wildlife Program in 2012, and the subsequent initiatives to improve conflict response to wolf, bear, and cougar conflicts. Currently, an Enforcement officer will respond to a human-wildlife conflict, and then a Wildlife Conflict Specialist will investigate the damage loss and implement deterrence measures, effectively doubling the response effort. Presently, wildlife conflict staff is not able to be as responsive to several other wildlife conflict related issues as the public would like, particularly deer and elk commercial crop damage.

Expanding the Wildlife Conflict Specialist workforce will align the initial human-wildlife conflict response to the same staff who later investigate any resultant livestock damage claim for payment and work with producers to minimize conflicts by implementing non-lethal deterrence measures, thus increasing efficiency and service effectiveness. Increased wildlife conflict capacity will also allow for proactive educational opportunities in communities where conflicts have historically occurred or where an increase in reports have been received. This proactive communication provides valuable wildlife co-existence information to the public and may help deter future conflicts.

Over the last two biennia, a combination of Wildlife Conflict Specialists and Fish and Wildlife Enforcement officers provided wildlife conflict service was provided by a combination. The Department employs 150 fish and wildlife officers. All field staff currently respond to wildlife conflicts by either providing mitigation advice over the phone or by making a contact on-scene due to a public safety response or animal depredation.

Many incidents require lengthy investigation or consultation and often follow-up communications with the landowner and surrounding landowners. Despite hiring 15 Wildlife Conflict Specialists and three Conflict Technicians between 2013 and 2018 to help with problem wildlife response, Enforcement officers have received more than 15,000 contacts specific to dangerous, problem, and injured wildlife since 2012.

In the last ten years alone, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of calls for service in response to bear, cougar, moose, and wolf conflicts. The number of cougar reports officers received and responded to has tripled since 2012, from an average of 300 calls a year to well

over 1,000 in 2021. Additionally, last year, officers responded to 1,300 calls for service specific to black bears ranging from problem incidents such as private property destruction (e.g., trash and structure damage) to dangerous incidents involving public safety. Adding 45 new staff will nearly triple the Department's dedicated wildlife conflict response staffing, increase proactive conflict avoidance outreach and education, and relieve many human-wildlife conflict response duties from Enforcement officers.

All current supervision of dedicated wildlife conflict staff is performed by six regional Wildlife Program Managers who manage and supervise between 22 and 51 staff and a myriad of wildlife and land management issues in their region, in addition to wildlife conflict. This proposal will add three supervisors to the agency to expand communication and outreach, supervise an expanded workforce, and better deliver this specialized public service.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

The first year of the decision package recognizes the challenging task of recruiting, hiring, onboarding, equipping, and training a significant number of technical staff. Therefore, the decision package only has approximately half of the staffing in year-one. For year two and subsequent biennia, this staffing level increases to the full level.

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, for 21.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions totals \$2,123,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2024. This increases to 45 FTE positions totaling \$4,363,000 in FY 2025 and ongoing. Goods and services, object E, include \$6,000 per FTE per year, for WDFW standard costs in all years, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, basic communications, training, and subscription costs per year, as well as central agency costs.

Travel costs, object G, are set at \$6,000 for FY 2024 and \$13,000 for FY 2025 and beyond. These costs include motel and per diem costs for training and meetings for these staff, as provided for in the current OFM travel rates. Leased vehicle costs are \$7,000 per year for each field deployed FTE based off current usage reduced to account for reduced area of responsibility per staff member, resulting in \$126,000 for FY 2024 and \$266,000 for FY 2025 and the outlying years.

In addition, certain specialized material items and tools, object J, are necessary for each employee in the field to perform this wildlife conflict work that are over and above the standard WDFW employee costs. These costs total \$60,000 in each of the first two years for non-capitalized assets and are not ongoing.

These items include:

- A small and a larger caliber rifle and optics for lethally dispatching injured, depredating, or dangerous wildlife, and a secure device or container to secure all arms and associated ammunition and pyrotechnics.
- A shotgun for dispatching wildlife, non-lethal hazing round deployment, and for pyrotechnic noise maker deployment,
- Radio communication equipment for call response, coordination with state and other responders, and for workplace safety.
- Assorted wildlife control and handling tools such as, catch-poles, transport boxes, live-traps, hobbles, PPE, and other tools for humane and safe wildlife handling.
- Wildlife capture dart rifles to disperse geographically around the state (shared among staff) for non-lethal immobilization of wildlife.
- An infrastructure support rate of 33.50% is included in object T as calculated on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classifications and the associated work for full program deployments are as follows:

20.0 FTE Biologist 3: The Biologist 3 are a senior level biologist that is the most skilled and highly trained full-time staff responding to and resolving human-wildlife conflicts. They will be deployed around the state in each of the six WDFW Regions and within the counties within each region. Duties include serving as the Wildlife Program's independent specialist on issues of wildlife conflict resolution within their area of responsibility. This position interacts with private landowners to address commercial crop, livestock and other private property damage primarily caused by ungulates (e.g., elk, deer) and/or carnivores (e.g., bear, cougar, wolf). The Conflict Specialist uses biologically based skills to plan, negotiate, and implement Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements with landowners and provide technical assistance related to preventative measures and lethal removal options. The position is also responsible for preventing and resolving carnivore depredation issues including conducting complex depredation investigations to determine cause of mortality. For interactions with carnivores the Conflict Specialist is responsible for planning, negotiating, and implementing Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements that include measures to help prevent future depredations. This position may also work to facilitate fish and wildlife related recreational access opportunities on private property. The position works cross program with Enforcement and, at times, with tribal co-management collaborations regarding wildlife conflict resolution.

10.0 FTE Natural Resource Specialist 1: The Natural Resource Specialist 1 is a lower skilled and trained full time staff member than the Biologist 3 and responds to less complicated conflict issues in support of the work of the Biologist 3s in the Region. They assist with response and follow-up to ongoing human-wildlife conflict issues that require continued attention for resolution. They will be deployed around the state in each of the six WDFW Regions and within the counties within each region. They typically would not be the primary responder to higher risk conflict issues and for planning strategies for response and prevention which require the more training, experience, and skill of the Biologist 3. This position also provides an “in-training” position for possible future advancement to a Biologist 3 position after attaining higher qualifications. Duties include interacting with private landowners to address commercial crop, livestock and other private property damage primarily caused by ungulates (e.g., elk, deer) and/or carnivores (e.g., bear, cougar, wolf) within the planning processes developed by the adjacent Biologist 3. The Natural Resource Specialist Conflict staff member assists in implementing Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements with landowners and provides technical assistance related to preventative measures and lethal removal options consistent with the planning performed by the Biologist 3.

8.0 FTE Natural Resource Technician 2: The Natural Resource Technician 2 is a career seasonal position employed for times of peak human wildlife conflict activity. They will be deployed around the state in each of the six WDFW Regions and within the counties within each region. They support the work of the Biologist 3 and Natural Resource Specialist 1 with tasks requiring the lowest level of risk and technical expertise required. As they are seasonal positions typically of 6 to 9 months, the actual number of people working at any time during the limited time exceeds 8.0 persons. The 8.0 FTE assumes “full-time employment” which it is not in the cases where employed. Thus, the staffing is multiplied at a time when it is most needed, in the places most needed. Duties include, supporting the higher-level conflict response staff with program implementation. Activities such as herding and hazing wildlife, assisting the Biologist 3 or Natural Resource Specialist 1 with conflict incident response, follow-up public contacts and monitoring of recurrent conflict issues, fence repair, and other labor-intensive task are handled by this position.

1.0 FTE Communication Consultant 3: The Communications Consultant 3 is responsible for coordinating with conflict staff in developing and providing outreach and communication with the public and other stakeholders about human-wildlife conflict prevention and provides consistent science-based information and outreach about conflict issues and incidents as they arise.

2.0 FTE Management Analyst 3: The Management Analyst 3 Works with the Contracts Office and field staff to develop, implement, monitor, and manage contracts and agreements with private landowners associated with damage prevention and mitigation. This position is the lead for managing Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements (DPCA), Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements for Livestock and Deer and Elk DPCA contracts. This position also provides support for managing Lure Crop, Cost-share Fencing, and Contract Range Rider contracts. It manages several other conflict mitigation programs including Bear Timber Damage permitting, Wildlife Control Operator training and permitting, and issues Special Trapping Permits. It manages the statewide program for commercial livestock and commercial crop loss prevention and compensation once those claims are filed. Assists field deployed conflict specialists and private landowners/producers with processing compensation claims for livestock loss caused by wolf, bear, or cougar depredation and for crop damage losses. Direct support to the Conflict Management and Prevention Section Manager. Other duties as assigned related to the management, analysis, and mitigation of negative human-wildlife interactions on a statewide level.

3.0 FTE WMS 2: The WMS 2 positions will be staffed with Assistant Regional Wildlife Program Managers in three WDFW Regions (of 6) that do not currently have the capacity to handle the additional supervision and planning related to additional wildlife conflict response. Additional regionally based policy, budget, and supervision capacity will allow for effective program implementation in the regions.

1.0 FTE WMS 3: The WMS 3 position will be staffed by a manager who will oversee policy development, strategic planning, and overall budget management for the agency’s human/wildlife conflict work and any other programs incorporated into the new division. The position is a highly skilled and senior manager that oversees the broad range of personnel, risk management, budgetary, and policy level decision making needed for successful program implementation. It is the main human/wildlife conflict subject matter expert for the Department, the Fish and Wildlife Commission, Tribal co-managers, and the public.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve three of the Results Washington goals: 1) Prosperous Economy, 2) Healthy & Safe Communities, and 3) Effective, Efficient & Accountable Government.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

Additionally, this decision package directly supports all four strategies in the WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan,

1. Proactively address conservation challenges
2. Engage communities through recreation and stewardship
3. Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions
4. Model operational and environmental excellence

WDFW Activity Inventory

This decision package supports WDFW foundational work:

Preserve and Restore Terrestrial Habitat and Species. \$4,881,000 in 2023-25 biennium and \$6,400,000 per biennium ongoing; 22 FTEs

Prompt and proper handling of human/wildlife conflicts can reduce or mitigate potential negative interactions and increase public tolerance for wildlife. Increased staffing in areas with wolves can help reduce wolf/livestock interactions and improve acceptance and long-term viability of wolves on the landscape. With increased community engagement by Department staff, those who have private lands that help sustain wildlife are less likely to want them lethally removed if other, non-lethal means can be found to address conflict problems. Increased staff engagement fosters durable, community-supported conservation solutions. Improved dangerous wildlife conflict response improves public safety for all members of the public, including those who work and recreate in the outdoors.

Manage Hunting Opportunities. \$4,881,000 in 2023-25 biennium and \$6,400,000 per biennium ongoing; 22 FTEs

Wildlife conflict response includes providing hunting opportunities through agreements with landowners to reduce damage caused by wildlife (e.g., elk and deer). The requirements for damage claim payment include ensuring public access for hunting of the species causing conflict and the management of these conflicts considers impacts to huntable populations of wildlife when issuing lethal removal permits to landowners. While information gained through wildlife conflict response is used to inform recreational hunting seasons, increased wildlife conflict staffing can help decrease the need address issues on private lands so more opportunities exist on lands open to the public.

Business Management and Obligations. \$136,000 (FY25 and \$136,000/fiscal year ongoing); 1 FTE

Adding the requested outreach personnel provides the infrastructure to successfully support the new division and communicate with the public about human/wildlife interactions. It is critical to create the capacity for deliberate educational messaging about living with wildlife, safe recreation in the outdoors, and agency response to human/wildlife conflicts.

Performance Outcomes:

The decision package supports the Department’s ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Technical assistance interactions
- Threatened and endangered species population increases
- Number of confirmed dangerous wildlife incidents mitigated for each year

This proposal increases wildlife-focused technical assistance for human-wildlife conflicts from 15 to 53 staff. Moving primary agency responses from our Enforcement Program to Wildlife Conflict Specialists within the Wildlife Program will help address all human-wildlife conflict issues and significantly increase the existing wildlife conflict specialist capacity to respond to deer and elk crop damage and dangerous wildlife scenarios across the state. By increasing specialist coverage, wildlife conflict incident response times will be reduced and proactive technical assistance to help the public avoid human-wildlife conflicts will be increased. This increased service will include having wildlife conflict specialists available seven days a week.

Increased wildlife conflict staffing will improve the agency’s proactive outreach with livestock producers. Especially as wolf populations, which are currently a state endangered species, continue to occupy new parts of Washington, increased proactive outreach will improve availability and implementation of non-lethal, proactive actions to help avoid livestock-wolf interactions. Avoiding these interactions is a key component of the agency’s wolf recovery strategy and will improve public acceptance as well as aid in species recovery.

Additional staff and resources will result in more efficient human-wildlife conflict incident response, proactive communication, and data collection. Increased data availability will improve technical guidance for reducing human-wildlife conflicts and improve the agency’s ability to mitigate dangerous wildlife incidents. These resources will also decrease producer frustration from delayed agency response to deer and elk complaints, reduce damage claims (and the resultant payments for damage), and potentially reduce the numbers of deer and elk lethally removed for causing damage.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

Human-wildlife conflict prevention and incident response is an issue of public safety, economic importance, and social and environmental interest to many currently underserved groups. Hiring a Communication Specialist position will allow the agency to provide outreach and education in underserved communities.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

It is important for all communities to have access to wildlife conflict resolutions as soon as possible. Rural areas in Washington especially need to have increased access to wildlife conflict resolution as the areas are remote and have the potential to have increased conflict.

Target Populations or Communities:

This proposal increases available agency resources to respond to wildlife conflicts across a broader geographic area (statewide), including urban areas and rural communities experiencing negative wildlife interactions. These areas would see increased dedicated wildlife conflict specialist staffing, thus increased services to more citizens of various and diverse groups.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 2: Working Lands by consolidating and improving agency response to wildlife conflicts. Consolidation and improved response will reduce producer frustrations, lower costly claims for damage payments, and allow for a seamless response and follow-through to dangerous wildlife conflicts including conflicts with bears and cougars. This package also directly aligns Action (ID#4) Support the long term viability and sustainability of agricultural lands and working forests to reduce pressure for conversion from the current use to a more developed use through expanding incentives and technical assistance for agricultural lands and owners of working forests.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 21: Place Attachment by consolidating and expanding its response to wildlife conflicts. Wildlife conflict specialists address crop damage and dangerous wildlife interactions, increasing preventative education and outreach and freeing enforcement officer time for other priority duties. This decision package also aligns with Action (ID#158) increase access

to and visibility of mental health connections to a healthy natural environment by managing and preserving natural areas for stress reduction, motivation, and long-term attachments.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22: Outdoor Recreation & Stewardship by adding more Conflict Specialists to the agency in order to increase proactive and preemptive measures to potentially decrease human-wildlife conflicts. Through these efforts, this decision package indirectly aligns with Action (ID#160) identify and fund removal of barriers resulting in the exclusion of people from participating in recreation and stewardship activities.

This decision packages fulfills the secondary criteria support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by supporting WDFW Wildlife program's capacity to respond to wildlife conflict.

State Workforce Impacts:

The total package will result in at least 30 positions being added to the Washington Association of Fish and Wildlife Professionals (WAFWP), and at least 1 being added to the Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE GG).

Intergovernmental:

Agency experience shows that several inter-governmental and external stakeholder interests should support this decision package. Cities, counties, conservation districts, the Washington Department of Agriculture, and the Washington Department of Natural Resources are entities that have shown interest in the wildlife resources managed in response to human-wildlife conflict. Support can come from personal, traditional, or cultural values as well as for potential safety and property impacts. Many of these values will overlap among the interested parties, but for differing reasons.

Tribes can be impacted by agency actions affecting cooperatively managed wildlife and are generally neutral to supportive of this work. Increasing proactive actions and decreasing the need to lethally remove wildlife causing damage can be a positive outcome. The agricultural community is impacted by negative human-wildlife interactions (e.g., crop damage or livestock losses) and increasing proactive deterrence actions can help mitigate those impacts. Other governmental entities like city and county enforcement offices engage with the Department in preventing or mitigating human-wildlife conflicts and improving the agency's ability to respond can reduce the need for their engagement over time.

Stakeholder Response:

A wide variety of stakeholders are supportive of this work, including environmental groups, animal rights groups, agricultural interests, livestock interests, the timber industry, hunting interests, and general outdoor recreation groups.

State Facilities Impacts:

There will be space needs for equipment storage and vehicle parking, including during after-hours within the regions. Workstations may be needed for office work that cannot occur in a mobile environment.

Management personnel within the decision package will require office space in 3 of the regional headquarters for the 3.0 FTE of WMS 2 Assistant Regional Program Managers.

Additional spaces are needed for 4 personnel in the Natural Resources Building (NRB): The 2.0 FTE Management Analysts, the 1.0 FTE Communications Consultant 3, and the 1.0 FTE WMS 3 Division Manager.

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$1,519	\$3,111	\$4,630	\$3,111	\$3,111	\$6,222
Obj. B	\$604	\$1,252	\$1,856	\$1,252	\$1,252	\$2,504
Obj. E	\$129	\$270	\$399	\$270	\$270	\$540
Obj. G	\$132	\$279	\$411	\$279	\$279	\$558
Obj. J	\$60	\$60	\$120	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. T	\$818	\$1,665	\$2,483	\$1,645	\$1,645	\$3,290

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Department of Fish and Wildlife
 2023-25 Regular Budget Session
 Policy Level - WD - Wildlife Disease Surveillance

Agency Recommendation Summary

The impacts of a warming climate on human, animal, and environmental health are real. For example, climate change enhances the spread of vector-borne diseases (e.g., West Nile Virus) through altered geographic and seasonal patterns of disease vectors. Minimizing the negative impacts of climate change are a priority for Washington’s Governor. If funded, this proposal will expand the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (WDFW) capacity to proactively mitigate wildlife disease risks associated with climate change and provide action plans and management for healthy wildlife in our state. [This package is related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	0.8	2.0	1.4	2.0	2.0	2.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$235	\$409	\$644	\$409	\$409	\$818
Total Expenditures	\$235	\$409	\$644	\$409	\$409	\$818

Decision Package Description

Washingtonians are concerned about wildlife disease events, which are often the first evidence of the presence of important pathogens in domestic animals or humans and may significantly impact wildlife populations or species. Examples include highly pathogenic avian influenza (“bird flu”) viruses, which are currently severely impacting the nation’s poultry industry; SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 in humans and has recently been documented in wild deer; and the fungi that causes white-nose syndrome and chytrid disease, responsible for the near-extinction of several bat and amphibian populations throughout the country.

Further, such events are often only detected once wildlife are already impacted and found sick or dying, at which point WDFW can only take reactionary, not proactive, action. In fact, once a disease is impacting a wildlife population, mitigation of the negative impacts is extremely costly, and unfortunately, often not successful.

The ability to provide early detection of pathogens of concern will greatly enhance the Department’s capacity to not only investigate and respond to wildlife morbidity and mortality events, but also to implement proactive management strategies that will help ensure healthy, resilient wildlife populations in Washington.

To detect wildlife disease pathogens in Washington as early as possible, this proposal will expand WDFW’s veterinary and data management capacity to implement proactive disease surveillance protocols. For most of the last two biennia, WDFW’s wildlife health team has included one full-time veterinarian and one Scientific Technician 2. During this period, the Department expanded its capacity with a second part-time project veterinarian, assisting on projects when funding was available. With the growing concern around wildlife health issues, the Department has secured ongoing funding for 0.5 FTE for the second veterinary position beginning in fiscal year 2022. This proposal seeks to secure the remaining 0.5 FTE funding needed for that position for a dedicated focus on disease surveillance, determinants of wildlife health monitoring, and management.

This proposal will also enable WDFW to provide detailed action plans for priority diseases before they are detected within the state so WDFW and partners can be prepared to contain and manage new diseases. This proposal will also enhance WDFW’s capacity to monitor and respond to ongoing wildlife health and disease concerns, such as highly pathogenic avian influenza, white-nose syndrome in bats, hemorrhagic disease in pygmy rabbits and deer, and shell disease in western pond turtles. This proposal will enhance WDFW’s data management capacity by funding 0.5 FTE for an IT Data Management – Journey level position to develop and maintain an enterprise data system, which will improve our ability to track individual animals’ “life history” (from sample collection to lab results and data interpretation for diagnoses and determining the cause of death).

Alternatives Considered

The Department considered accomplishing this work by reprioritizing the duties of the one existing full-time veterinarian. This option isn’t viable because the Department would lose veterinary capacity for ongoing wildlife capture work, managing wildlife immobilization drugs, and training.

Not funding this proposal would result in WDFW being largely reactive to wildlife disease outbreaks, with one notable exception. The Legislature provided ongoing funding in the 2021-23 biennium for proactive monitoring for chronic wasting disease (CWD) in Washington’s deer and elk populations, and the development and implementation of a CWD action plan. This proposal seeks to replicate that value for other emergent disease needs. Detecting disease outbreaks without proactive surveillance usually coincides with the disease already impacting wildlife at the population level when mitigation of the negative impacts is often more costly and less successful.

WDFW has previously managed the data and data systems for wildlife health issues on a project-by-project basis, which is both inefficient and has taken away IT support of other wildlife data systems that support the management of wildlife populations. Not funding this proposal would result in continued de-prioritization in maintaining and enhancing existing data systems.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This is an expansion of a current service. WDFW's wildlife health team currently includes one full-time veterinarian and one Scientific Technician. Over the last two biennia, the Department expanded the team's capacity with a second part-time project (0.5 FTE) veterinarian who assisted on projects when funding was available. This proposal seeks to secure the remaining 0.5 FTE for the project veterinarian to focus on disease surveillance and management.

WDFW's "Wildlife Species Data Management" (WSDM) team currently supports the wildlife health team with project-by-project species data collection software and data management, among the many other software and systems that support the Wildlife Program's species population management. This proposal seeks to increase data management capacity at a level of 0.5 FTE for an IT Data Management – Journey.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, total \$114,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2024 and \$211,000 in FY 2025 and ongoing.

Goods and services, object E, include \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year, as well as central agency costs. \$4,000 in FY24 and \$8,000 in FY25 and ongoing for vehicles and equipment such as veterinary supplies (e.g., swabs, viral transport media, whirlpaks, formalin containers, blood collection tubes, needles, syringes, etc).

Travel costs, object G, total \$3,000 in FY 2024 and \$5,000 in FY 2025 and ongoing.

FY 2024 includes \$50,000, object C, for operational costs associated with action plan development, specialized material items, and tools necessary for each employee in the field to perform disease surveillance work. In FY 2025 and ongoing, this cost increases to \$70,000 for further operational costs associated with action plan development and implementation, and material items required for collecting samples from wildlife and the associated laboratory processing of those samples. An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classification and the associated work for 2.0 FTE are as follows:

0.5 FTE Epidemiologist 3, non-medical: The Epidemiologist 3 will be stationed in the western Washington region and will have statewide responsibilities. Duties include assessments of key wildlife diseases, developing action plans, coordinating with federal, state, tribal, and external partners, and implementing strategies and practices from action plans to achieve the desired outcomes.

1.0 FTE Scientific Technician 2: The Scientific Technician 2 will be stationed in the western Washington region and will work statewide. The position will report to the Epidemiologist 3 funded by this proposal. Duties include assisting in the implementation of the disease action plans, collection of wildlife samples, conducting necropsies on wildlife, and other data collection and field activities to achieve the desired outcomes.

0.5 Journey-IT App Development: IT Data Management – Journey level position will be stationed at a regional or headquarters office and will develop and maintain an enterprise data system that will be used to support animal disease data collection, analyses, and sharing with external partners and the public.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve two Results Washington goals: 1) Sustainable Energy and Clean Environment; and 2) Healthy and Safe Communities. This proposal helps the Department meet these goals by becoming more proactive in wildlife disease surveillance and management in a warming climate where disease outbreaks are expected to increase. Because some wildlife diseases are transferable to people, early detection is critical and makes them more manageable.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This decision package directly supports the Department's 25-Year Strategic Plan strategies "Proactively address conservation challenges" and "Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions" by early detection of wildlife disease pathogens that can have negative impacts to Washington's native wildlife. The disease assessments and post-detection action plans will incorporate the current state of knowledge on the diseases and mitigation actions to reduce the impacts.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Preserve and Restore Terrestrial Habitats and Species, 0.8 FTE, \$235,000 General Fund-State.

This package supports the activity inventory item "Preserve and Restore Terrestrial Habitats and Species" and the applicable support strategy:

- Recover and sustain diverse wildlife populations

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Priority research needs being met
- Threatened and Endangered Species population increases

There are clear links between determinants of health (e.g., disease, habitat quality, etc), resilient wildlife, and climate change. If this proposal is funded, it will enhance the Department's capacity to conduct priority research and surveillance to investigate specific determinants of health and causes of death in morbidity/mortality events in Washington's wildlife. The outcome of such comprehensive health-targeted research projects can be used to directly guide management and mitigative actions for supporting healthy, resilient wildlife that are future ready, especially in face of climate change.

This project will directly impact threatened and endangered species population recovery, with the ultimate goal of population increases. Many threatened and endangered species face negative impacts due to real disease issues, for example the western pond turtles and fungal-associated shell disease and the Columbia basin pygmy rabbits and rabbit hemorrhagic disease virus. Other wildlife diseases loom on the horizon (e.g., snake fungal disease and other emerging infectious diseases) that could severely limit population recovery. If this proposal is funded, it will increase the Department's capacity to monitor, manage, and mitigate the impacts of disease on threatened and endangered species. Furthermore, with funding, this work will provide direct support to protect the determinants of health for threatened and endangered species in Washington, thus helping to ensure population increases for healthy, resilient wildlife.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The Department is committed to improving, growing, and evolving community engagement, particularly with historically excluded and marginalized communities. This proposal is a proactive approach that will help mitigate future potential damage.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Because wildlife diseases are transferable it is important to mitigate risks as soon as possible. This proposal will help to protect against disproportional impacts to vulnerable communities.

Target Populations or Communities:

This proposal will protect the populations most vulnerable to animal-to-human transferrable diseases – the immunocompromised, low-income communities in high populous areas, and rural communities closest to wildlife areas. Some wildlife diseases are transferable to people and vice-versa. As an example, SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID in humans and has recently been documented in wild deer) had a disproportional impact on different communities. From that perspective, funding this package will positively impact community health by proactively detecting and managing wildlife diseases that could impact people.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 18: Awareness of Effects of Climate Change and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 131) Expand monitoring, research, and assessment of the individual and cumulative impacts and risks of climate change on Puget Sound, by increasing capacity to understand the climate impacts associated with vector borne diseases among wildlife and humans by supporting disease surveillance and response teams and data management systems. This decision package fulfills the Secondary Criteria - Adds value by filling gaps from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by increasing capacity to understand the climate impacts associated with vector borne diseases among wildlife and humans by supporting disease surveillance and response teams and data management systems. This decision package also fulfills the Secondary Criteria Continuing support by ensuring that wildlife disease surveillance programs continue to be funded to support detection and rapid response of vector borne pathogens that may impact wildlife and human health. This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca task force recommendation 35 Conduct research, science and monitoring to inform decision-making, adaptive management and implementation of actions to recover Southern Residents by ensuring capacity for disease monitoring programs that provide input for adaptive management and mitigate risk for marine mammals and food webs.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

This proposal has a potential to impact intergovernmental entities that have an interest in and/or jurisdiction around wildlife health. Examples include the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), responsible for managing livestock and domestic fowl diseases shared by wildlife, and the Washington State Department of Health (DOH), responsible for managing human diseases shared by wildlife. The implementation of this proposal would include proactive collaboration with these entities in the action plan development stage and disease surveillance design and implementation. It would also include assistance for tribes that don't have Wildlife Health staff. It is anticipated that each of those entities would support this proposal, including WSDA, DOH, county government, and tribes.

Stakeholder Response:

A diverse group of stakeholders often impacted by wildlife diseases, including commercial poultry owners, private captive wildlife operations, zoos, hunters, commercial fur operations, and licensed wildlife rehabilitators, will likely be supportive of this request.

State Facilities Impacts:

New staff that result from this proposal will have an assigned duty station within the western Washington region, which will likely be at a regional headquarters or field office. Within the current hybrid work environment of increased telework opportunities, there are no current concerns over lack of space to house staff at these locations.

Ideally the vet and scientific technician funded by this proposal would have access to a wildlife health wet/dry laboratory for conducting necropsies, collecting tissue, storing animals or animal parts, and more. This need has been identified in the Department's capital budget prioritization process for consideration.

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

Reference Documents

[WDS IT addendum with FW.docx](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

Yes

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$86	\$153	\$239	\$153	\$153	\$306
Obj. B	\$28	\$58	\$86	\$58	\$58	\$116
Obj. C	\$50	\$70	\$120	\$70	\$70	\$140
Obj. E	\$9	\$20	\$29	\$20	\$20	\$40
Obj. G	\$3	\$5	\$8	\$5	\$5	\$10
Obj. T	\$59	\$103	\$162	\$103	\$103	\$206

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

This proposal expands staffing capacity within the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to complete necessary federal fishery permits and obtain complete Endangered Species Act (ESA) coverage to maximize recreational fishing opportunities for salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River Basin. Due to the year-round presence of listed salmon and steelhead, WDFW is legally required to have ESA coverage to prosecute recreational fisheries in the Columbia River Basin. Current staffing levels are inadequate and would take a decade or more to complete all necessary federal ESA permits. Consequences of not completing federal permits include increased litigation risk, inability to open new fisheries, and/or potentially closing existing fisheries.

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$697	\$697	\$1,394	\$697	\$697	\$1,394
Total Expenditures	\$697	\$697	\$1,394	\$697	\$697	\$1,394

Decision Package Description

Most of WDFW's existing federal fishery permits (principally Columbia River tributary) currently do not provide complete ESA coverage, do not maximize flexibility to manage fisheries, do not incorporate the best available science, and lack consistency. Some federal ESA permits still need to be completed and submitted to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries for consultation and approval. Federal ESA permits issued to WDFW by NOAA Fisheries are our legal means to prosecute and maximize recreational fishing opportunities for salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River Basin which is part of WDFW's mission and helps remove surplus hatchery fish which has implications for wild fish recovery.

WDFW needs dedicated staff to collect and analyze data, develop fishery models, draft and submit permits, consult with NOAA Fisheries for approval, implement the terms and condition of final permits, ensure permit compliance, and annually report findings to NOAA Fisheries. The approach WDFW plans to follow is development of what are called Fisheries Management and Evaluation Plans (FMEP). FMEPs are the pathway, essentially an application, for WDFW to seek coverage from NOAA for fisheries to occur under the ESA. Well-written FMEPs can provide maximum fishery management flexibility and can be modified at WDFW's discretion, with NOAA's concurrence, to adapt to changes in listing status, hatchery production levels, and/or new and emerging recreational fishing opportunities. With adequate staffing capacity, WDFW could complete this new suite of federal ESA permits within two to five years, compared to a decade or more with existing staff.

Additionally, WDFW received \$2.1M in our 2021-23 BN Operating Budget to conduct salmon and steelhead recreational fishery monitoring in the Columbia River Basin as required by federal ESA permits. This funding is ongoing and available to monitor any new and/or emerging recreational fisheries.

Federal ESA permits the WDFW needs to complete and update include, but are not necessarily limited to:

1. Lower Columbia River (LCR) FMEP-The current LCR FMEP was approved by NOAA Fisheries in 2003 prior to implementation of hatchery fish mass-marking and mark-selective fisheries for fall Chinook and prior to LCR coho being listed under ESA. The LCR FMEP is outdated, needs to be expanded to include coho and is limiting our ability to expand both mark-selective and non-mark-selective fisheries when returns are sufficient.
2. Middle Columbia River (MCR) FMEP-The MCR FMEP was submitted to NOAA Fisheries for initial review and returned for further update. This FMEP needs a thorough update and resubmission to NOAA Fisheries. Since the original FMEP was submitted, a Touchet River spring Chinook program has been initiated. Updating this permit will provide ESA coverage and allow WDFW to open a recreational fishery focusing on returning adults from this program.
3. Snake River Steelhead & Resident Fish FMEP-This permit was completed in 2009 and requires updating. Since approval of this permit there have been new runs of fish established (e.g., coho) and considerable work has been put into salmon and steelhead recovery as well as monitoring and evaluation of hatchery programs. New data collected since 2009 improves our ability to predict adult returns and allows us to increase recreational fishing opportunity within the basin.
4. Upper Columbia River Steelhead (UCR) FMEP-This permit would cover steelhead conservation fisheries for populations originating

above Priest Rapids Dam. The ability to conduct conservation fisheries is currently tied to ESA permits authorizing hatchery production and releases. This is problematic because any permit non-compliance on one side negatively affects the other. Additionally, existing guidelines for opening conservation fisheries are outdated. A new UCR steelhead FMEP would cover all mainstem and tributary fisheries, separate fishery and hatchery production activities, and be covered under a different section of the ESA which gives WDFW greater fishery management flexibility.

5. Methow River Spring Chinook FMEP-This permit would cover spring Chinook conservation fisheries in the Methow River. Both hatchery- and natural-origin spring Chinook in the UCR are listed under the ESA. In years when natural-origin fish are abundant, NOAA will authorize the removal of hatchery-origin fish via recreational fishing. This action is currently authorized in the Wenatchee River, but not the Methow River. This permit would create a new recreational fishing opportunity in the UCR.
6. Recreational Fisheries for Unlisted Species FMEP-This permit covers recreational fisheries for unlisted salmon, sturgeon, and resident game fish. This permit was issued in 2008 and expired in 2018. NOAA Fisheries has issued annual extensions since 2018. WDFW needs to submit an updated version of this permit to account for new fishing opportunities recently made available (e.g., coho).

Between 1991 to 2005, multiple populations of salmon and steelhead endemic to the Columbia River Basin have been listed under the ESA. WDFW's federal ESA fishery permits were developed independently over the past two decades and until recently provided near complete ESA coverage to prosecute and maximize recreational fisheries in the Columbia River Basin, while meeting conservation measures for listed salmon and steelhead populations. However, over the past 5-10 years (depending upon location) there have been changes to hatchery production programs (i.e., decreases, increases, new programs, mass-marking, etc.), improved monitoring of existing salmonid populations, and successful reintroductions of salmonids to areas where they once were very depressed or extirpated. These changes have made our current suite of federal ESA permits outdated, prevent WDFW from opening new recreational fishing opportunities, and may not provide the necessary protective measures for all listed salmon and steelhead populations.

The WDFW has the opportunity to expedite the updates/changes mentioned above and develop a new suite of federal ESA permits that will allow us to obtain complete ESA coverage and maximize recreational fishing opportunities in Columbia River Basin tributaries while ensuring conservation measures are met for listed salmon and steelhead populations. This proposal has not previously been requested by WDFW.

Responding to Current Opportunities

This proposal expands staffing capacity within the WDFW to complete all necessary Columbia River federal fishery permits (primarily tributaries) and obtain complete coverage under the ESA. WDFW currently has one dedicated full-time equivalent (FTE) staff person who works on ESA permitting and compliance. This FTE works exclusively in the upper Columbia River and only part-time on fishery specific permits. Given the backlog of federal ESA permit work needed, it will take several years, for existing staff to complete. Additional staff could complete this work within approximately five years. If done correctly, the WDFW could have complete ESA coverage that incorporates the best available science and is standardized across the Columbia River Basin, while ensuring conservation measures are met for listed salmon and steelhead populations.

This proposal funds four new FTEs dedicated to complete, implement and manage new federal ESA permits in the Columbia River Basin. Funding new staff is the best option because WDFW's existing staff do not have the capacity to complete all federal ESA permitting in the Columbia River Basin. New staff will have full schedules initially and into the future completing, implementing, and managing federal ESA permits. Additional staff capacity includes:

- One Environmental Planner 4 position to lead all federal ESA permitting efforts (including future implementation);
- Two Fish and Wildlife Biologist 3 positions to serve as support staff in completing and eventually implementing all federal ESA permits; and
- One Research Scientist 1 position to perform high level data analyses, develop fishery models, and help complete certain components of federal ESA permits and support future analysis and reporting.

Alternatives Explored and Consequences of Not Funding the Package

Two main alternatives were considered and dismissed. Maintaining the status quo would allow the Department to continue to use its limited capacity to complete necessary federal ESA permits. This work could take one or more decades to complete. This does not alleviate the consequences of not completing this work in a timely fashion, including opening new and closing existing recreational fisheries. Another option considered was to delegate this work to existing staff. Other WDFW staff already have full workloads and no capacity and/or expertise to complete necessary federal ESA permits. This does not alleviate the consequences of not completing this work.

There are no other lower cost alternatives and no other state agency provides ESA permitting services. No RCW/WAC changes will streamline this process. This proposal is the best option because dedicated staff is needed to quickly and efficiently complete necessary federal ESA permitting. It is also the best option towards avoiding consequences of not completing this critical work. Consequences for not completing this work include increased risk of litigation and not being able to create new fisheries and prosecute or expand certain existing recreational fisheries due to lack of complete ESA coverage.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

The WDFW has only one dedicated FTE that works on ESA permitting and compliance. This FTE works exclusively in the upper Columbia River and only part-time on federal fishery permits. Various funding sources (e.g., project, CRSSE, GFS, etc.) have been used over the past several biennia to pay for salaries, benefits, goods and services, and travel of this one FTE. This proposal would technically expand that service to the entire Columbia River Basin.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, for 4.0 FTE positions total \$458,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2024 and ongoing. Goods and services, object E, include \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs as well as central agency costs. Travel object G, \$40,000 in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing for motor pool vehicle rental and mileage, additional travel expenses. The DES Long Term Rental Rate (Permanently Assigned Agency Vehicle Monthly Rate) is \$427 per month for a half ton 4x4 truck ($427 \times 12 = \$5,124$ per year $\times 4$ staff = \$20,496. Additional travel expenses include \$.35 per mile vehicle charges from DES ($14,000$ miles per year $\times \$0.35 = \$4,900$ $\times 4$ staff = \$19,600) for the four staff. Finally, an infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classifications and the associated work for the four new staff are as follows:

1.0 FTE Environmental Planner 4 (EP4): Leads FMEP development schedule, coordinates completion of updated FMEPs and consultation with NOAA Fisheries staff. Post approval of permits, lead team focused on implementation of terms and conditions of permits and compliance reporting.

2.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 3: Complete development of FMEPs through synthesis of existing data for standardized analyses, under the guidance of the EP4. Provide technical representation during consultations with NOAA fisheries staff. Implement future monitoring and/or other terms of conditions of permits, including compliance reporting.

1.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Research Scientist: Lead fishery model development and application to datasets for standardized analyses of Columbia River Basin fisheries needed for FMEP development. Provide technical representation during consultations with NOAA Fisheries staff. Perform future fishery analysis as part of fishery implementation.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This proposal contributes to Goal #2, Prosperous economy, of the Governor's Results Washington. Washington attracts many businesses and new residents because of the diversity of natural resources, outdoor experiences, and quality of life. Recreational salmon and steelhead fisheries in the Columbia River Basin contribute millions annually into local economies large and small. Many of these recreational fisheries are in small and often rural communities that are reliant on visiting anglers for survival. Recreational anglers purchase gas, food, drink, and fishing tackle and stay in hotels, motels, or resorts and eat at local restaurants. Maximizing recreational salmon and steelhead fishing opportunities in the Columbia River Basin benefits all businesses and economies.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This package supports all four of the strategies in WDFW's 25-Year Strategic Plan: 1) Proactively address conservation challenges, 2) Engage communities through recreation and stewardship, 3) Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions, and 4)

Model operational and environmental excellence.

The goals of this decision package are to complete necessary federal ESA permitting that: (1) minimizes conservation risks to ESA-listed species resulting from recreational fishing, (2) maximizes recreational fishing opportunities in the Columbia River Basin, (3) provides maximum fishery management flexibility, (4) positively impacts local economies where these recreational fisheries occur, and (5) satisfies angler demands and contributes to R3. These goals align with and/or contribute to several of the strategies listed in WDFW's 25-Year Strategic Plan including the following:

PROACTIVELY ADDRESS CONSERVATION CHALLENGES:

1. Near-Term Actions:
 1. #2-Vastly expand current efforts to manage and recover at-risk fish and wildlife species.
2. 25-Year Desired Outcomes:
 1. #2-The quality and/or quantity of harvest opportunities are sustainable
 2. #3-People recognize, prioritize, and take pride in the value of healthy species, habitats, and sustainable harvest opportunities for their contributions to our health and quality of life.
 3. #8-WDFW is recognized as a national leader in fish and wildlife conservation policy and management.

ENGAGE IN COMMUNITIES THROUGH RECREATION AND STEWARDSHIP:

1. Near-Term Actions:
 1. #2-Complete a plan to better recruit, retain, and reactivate anglers, hunters, and nature appreciators, emphasizing increased participation from diverse audiences.
 2. #7-Ensure that decision-making processes are transparent and easy to participate in.
 3. #8-Better understand and deliver on hunting and fishing customer service, including needs for predictability, as we continue to focus on maintaining healthy fish and wildlife populations.
2. Longer-Term Actions:
 1. #1-Build capacity for better public engagement in planning and resource stewardship.
 2. #4-Expand and improve access to the outdoors.
3. 25-Year Desired Outcomes:
 1. #2-Anglers', hunters', and other recreationalists' levels of satisfaction are high.
 2. #5-WDFW is well recognized for contributing to residents' quality of life.
 3. #6-Wide recognition of the role fishing and hunting plays as conservation tools for many species.

DELIVER SCIENCE THAT INFORMS WASHINGTON'S MOST PRESSING FISH AND WILDLIFE QUESTIONS:

1. Near-Term Actions:
 1. #1-Develop, prioritize, and deliver a science/policy framework to include the following components (includes sub bullets 1, 2, and 4).
 2. #3-Develop an agency-level data management system to provide better science for agency decision-making and constituent outreach (includes sub bullets 2 and 3).
2. Longer-Term Actions:
 1. #2-Communicate, with more transparency, how science informs decisions.
3. 25-Year Desired Outcomes:
 1. #1-We have clear science priorities, and we're applying our resources to the highest policy needs.
 2. #2-We have a process that assesses the effectiveness of our science in informing policy and management outcomes.
 3. #3-The public trusts our science.
 4. #4-There is effective coordination between science, policy, and management functions.

MODEL OPERATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE:

1. Near-Term Actions:
 1. #2-Increase decision transparency to both internal and external audiences.
 2. #6-Assess the need and identify actions to improve cross-program/regional collaboration.
2. 25-Year Desired Outcomes:

1. #1-Staff and the public see the Department is living its values.
2. #2-Department operations takes advantage of technology.
3. #3-Department operations are synchronized across programs and regions.
4. #5-WDFW's skilled and increasingly diverse workforce is well equipped to serve Washington residents.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Manage Fishing Opportunities, 4 FTE and \$697,000 each fiscal year, State General Fund. This package supports our activity inventory item "Manage Fishing Opportunities" and applicable support strategy, to monitor and manage fin fish populations.

Fish resources are assessed, monitored and evaluated to ensure harvest and resource management actions are sustainable and based on sound science. To understand what fishery resources are available, department staff conduct field investigations to count the number of juveniles migrating to saltwater and adults returning to freshwater and conduct tests fisheries to verify abundance assumptions. The department develops and uses fish management harvest models that consider the annual variability of fish abundance to maximize recreational and commercial opportunities while minimizing risks to wild fish populations. To understand the life-cycle and movements of fish migration (necessary to protect threatened native runs), the department marks salmon, uses coded-wire tags, and analyzes population genetics. Selective fisheries are offered to provide increased harvest opportunity on hatchery fish while protecting wild populations and assisting recovery of fish populations.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department’s ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Fisheries in compliance with harvest protection goals
- Mark-selective fisheries
- Number of angler days
- Total license sales achieved
- Number of online sales transactions
- Threatened and endangered species population increases

The completion of six and potentially more federal ESA permits that gives WDFW complete ESA coverage to prosecute and maximize recreational fishing opportunities in the Columbia River Basin (principally in tributaries). If this proposal is funded, it is expected to take two to five years to complete all federal ESA permits.

The number of marked-selective fishery opportunities in the Columbia River Basin will increase as a result of the work described in this proposal.

Some of these new opportunities will be “standalone fisheries” targeting a single species (e.g., coho) and represent new angler effort, whereas others will be “additive” targeting a new species amongst others available for harvest and potentially increase existing angler effort. For example, in 2020 and 2021 the WDFW received authorization from NOAA Fisheries to open a standalone coho fishery in a ~2.5-mile section of the Icicle River (Chelan County) during the months of October and November. During those two years, total angler effort was 6,800 hours constituting 2,500 angler days/trips. Another example is the relatively new catch-and-release wild steelhead fishery on the Skagit River. Since 2018, total angler effort was 38,000 hours constituting 6,000 angler days/trips. The WDFW anticipates similar or potentially higher increases in angler effort from opening new recreational fishing opportunities because of the work detailed in this proposal.

The Department anticipates opening new fisheries will have a positive impact on license sales through angler recruitment, retention, and reactivation (R3). We also anticipate that completing/updating federal ESA permitting using the best available science will have a positive impact (i.e., minimize our take/mortality) on threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead.

Another performance outcome of this proposal is the positive economic impact to local -- and often rural -- communities. The Icicle River coho fishery had an economic impact of \$145,000 (2,500 trips/days X \$58/trip) to the local economy. The Skagit River catch-and-release wild steelhead fishery had an economic impact of \$348,000 (6,000 trips/days X \$58/trip). The WDFW anticipates similar or potentially higher economic impacts from opening new recreational fishing opportunities.

The negative outcomes or results avoided, eliminated, or mitigated by completing the work in this proposal includes:

- Litigation risks over incomplete ESA coverage.
- Criticisms from anglers, local communities, and elected officials over not maximizing recreational fishing opportunities in the Columbia River Basin due to incomplete ESA coverage.
- High and undesired levels of hatchery-origin salmon and steelhead on the spawning grounds.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

All communities large (metropolitan) and small (rural) adjacent to the Columbia River Basin would be positively impacted by this decision package. Maximizing recreational fishing opportunities and in particular new fisheries will have a positive impact on those economies. Low- and middle-income groups residing within adjacent communities to the Columbia River Basin will also be positively impacted by this proposal through improved access to harvestable salmon and steelhead.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Funding this proposal would expand recreational fishing opportunities and access to Washington's anglers. Maximizing recreational fishing opportunities and in particular prosecuting new fisheries throughout the Columbia River Basin would provide excluded and/or under-represented individuals who may not have the resources to fish more popular areas, the chance to fish for salmon and steelhead locally.

Target Populations or Communities:

Increased fishing opportunities directly benefits all communities in the state and is an important component of health equity. Participation in outdoor recreation and access to wildlife observation opportunities benefit those currently involved and communities that have been under-represented. Funding this proposal would expand availability and accessibility of resources in the form of maximum recreational fishing opportunities and in particular new fisheries in the Columbia River Basin.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

N/A

State Workforce Impacts:

This proposal does not impact existing collective bargaining agreements, compensation, or benefits policy.

Intergovernmental:

There are no anticipated negative impacts to tribal, regional, county, or city governments or any political subdivision of the state. Conversely, the WDFW anticipates positive impacts resulting from the work detailed in this proposal. Maximizing recreational fishing opportunities in the Columbia River Basin will have a positive benefit on local economies where those fisheries occur while ensuring all conservation measures are met for listed salmon and steelhead populations.

The WDFW anticipates support from recreational anglers and angler groups who fish Columbia River Basin salmon and steelhead fisheries. It is also anticipated local communities and elected officials will support the outcomes of this proposal. The WDFW does not foresee any opposition to the outcomes of this proposal.

Stakeholder Response:

Non-governmental stakeholders impacted by this proposal includes Trout Unlimited, The Conservation Angler, and potentially others. These stakeholders have a vested interest in recovering Columbia River Basin salmon and steelhead populations. We have not formally solicited opinions from these stakeholders on this DP proposal. However, informal discussions with these stakeholders indicates strong support for completing/updating federal ESA permits.

State Facilities Impacts:

This proposal impacts WDFW facilities because the new FTEs will need office spaces. Existing leases are sufficient to support these staff and impacts can be mitigated for with WDFW's flexible/hybrid work options that allows staff to telework where and when appropriate.

Changes from Current Law:

This proposal does not require any changes to existing statutes, rules, and/or contracts.

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

This proposal is not linked to any litigation, audit finding, and/or executive order or task force recommendation.

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$336	\$336	\$672	\$336	\$336	\$672
Obj. B	\$122	\$122	\$244	\$122	\$122	\$244
Obj. E	\$24	\$24	\$48	\$24	\$24	\$48
Obj. G	\$40	\$40	\$80	\$40	\$40	\$80
Obj. T	\$175	\$175	\$350	\$175	\$175	\$350

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

This proposal will support increased needs at hatchery facilities for current and expanded production which includes fish health, adult collection, and mass-marking. If not funded, hatchery production goals may not be met, fish health will not be staffed adequately to monitor state and commercial aquaculture, and fish intended for harvest will not be mass marked. This funding ensures ongoing measures to support recreational and commercial harvest, tribal harvest, Southern Resident killer whale prey, and conservation efforts for wild salmonids. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	4.6	5.6	5.1	6.6	7.6	7.1
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$2,401	\$2,569	\$4,970	\$2,726	\$2,895	\$5,621
Total Expenditures	\$2,401	\$2,569	\$4,970	\$2,726	\$2,895	\$5,621

Decision Package Description

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) owns and/or operates 80 hatchery facilities with over 160 programs that release over 160 million juvenile anadromous salmon and steelhead and 17.5 million trout annually, with more than 120 million salmon and steelhead mass marked each year.

The Fish Health Unit provides fish health services at all WDFW facilities, contract services at some tribal and PUD facilities, regulates and inspects commercial finfish aquaculture operations, issues finfish transport permits, and operates a microbiology laboratory in Olympia. With this level of work responsibilities, the unit is chronically understaffed and therefore unable to provide appropriate fish health services throughout the state. Additionally, climate change and other environmental factors have and will continue to increase demands on WDFW aquatic veterinarians, pathologists, and microbiologist due to changes in pathogen distributions, transmissibility, and virulence.

Recruiting temporary staff to accomplish federal and state requirements to mass mark Chinook, coho and steelhead has been challenging or impossible to do in some areas of the state. In addition, the Department and co-managers have taken on increased production for the Southern Resident orcas. Switching a large portion of the manual mass-marking fleet to AutoFish systems (automated mass-marking trailers) is necessary to complete this work and will require additional maintenance and fleet management resources to be successful.

The Toutle Fish Collection Facility (TFCF), completed in 1989, was built to compensate for upstream passage challenges of adult salmonids at the Sediment Retention Structure (SRS). The SRS was built on the North Toutle River by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) to mitigate downstream impacts of increased sediment travel as a result of the Mt. St. Helens eruption in 1980. Post-construction, ownership and operational responsibility were transferred to the State of Washington. WDFW currently operates the TFCF between 2-3 days per week to sample and transport adults from September through May to provide upstream passage for winter-run steelhead and coho salmon. Staffing has been funded through the Mitchell Act associated with the North Toutle hatchery at around 3.5 months of Scientific Technician time per year. This work has been supplemented by volunteer help in the past. Without volunteer support, the Mitchell Act funding has been inadequate to fund full staffing and operation of the facility. With the lack of increased Mitchell Act funding and increasing overall Mitchell Act hatchery operational costs, funding to support TFCF operations will no longer be available. WDFW is looking to shift this operation at status quo levels utilizing state funds in future biennia. Post upgrade in 2025, the operational costs will increase and transition to a 12-month operation.

Proposed Solution

This proposal will hire an Epidemiologist 3 as an Aquaculture Coordinator and supervisory veterinarian. This position will assume supervisory responsibilities for fish health field operations, lead inspections of commercial aquaculture facilities, and be responsible for ensuring that commercial facilities are appropriately regulated, safeguarding against the importation and movement of pathogens that may affect hatchery and wild fish in Washington. This individual will establish a veterinarian-client-patient-relationship at all facilities statewide, enabling them to provide veterinary services at any facility as needed.

Two AutoFish systems will also be purchased each biennium to meet mass-marking requirements for all hatchery salmonids. Each AutoFish system takes a minimum one year to build and receive. In addition, management resources must be obtained to address ongoing fleet

maintenance and fleet management to be successful. This includes hiring a fleet maintenance mechanic and a Biologist 3 to assist with managing on the ground operations and quality control.

Finally, this proposal will secure funding to staff the TFCF facility (without reliance on volunteers) from September through May in the interim period until the TFCF upgrades are completed, at which time operations will move to 12 months per year and will include increased operational expenses.

Alternatives Explored

Currently, the work of the proposed Aquaculture Coordinator and supervisory veterinarian position is inappropriately spread among three existing positions. These positions are currently overworked with their “regular” responsibilities, resulting in inefficiencies, reduced capacities, and work not completed or completed in a timely fashion. Without funding this Epidemiologist 3 position, these problems will persist; the Fish Health Unit will be unable to provide comprehensive fish health services for Washington State Hatcheries and will struggle to fulfill legal obligations associated with commercial finfish aquaculture. Given the projected association between climate change and an increase in aquatic diseases within hatchery and aquaculture settings, and the chronic understaffing of the Fish Health unit, the absence of funding for this position will hinder the Department’s ability to appropriately address the management demands of the near-term and more distant futures.

If the Department is not able to shift most of the mass-marking to AutoFish systems, hatchery production would need to be reduced to levels that can be marked manually. This fish production decrease would have a negative economic impact on local economies, impact federal court orders made with treaty tribes and reduce prey availability for Southern Resident orcas. Providing this funding is the most cost-effective way to ensure successful mass-marking of WDFW’s hatchery production of Chinook, coho and steelhead without a corresponding reduction in production. The Department currently utilizes a fleet of 27 manual mass-marking trailers to facilitate the marking. WDFW hires temporary staff to conduct seasonal mass-marking through a private temporary labor firm. If WDFW is not able to fill the trailers with 12-14 workers at each location with contracted labor, the Department will lose the capacity to meet state and federal requirements of mass-marking 100 percent of hatchery-produced fish. Unmarked fish may not be released under the Endangered Species Act, because they would compromise hatchery broodstocks and complicate native fish population monitoring. The Department has utilized many strategies over the years to maintain levels of production including the employment of state inmates under the supervision of the Department of Corrections, maintaining well-trained seasonal staff, utilizing alternate temporary staffing agencies, and actively looking for alternatives in purchasing and efficiencies to maximize the use of state dollars. These efforts are not sufficient to ensure the success of the mass-marking program going forward.

Despite the operation of the Sediment Retention Structure on the North Toutle River, the TFCF facility is still impacted by significant sediment loads requiring weekly, sometimes daily, flushing/clearing of the facility to remain operational. WDFW is partnering with the USACE to cost share on an upgrade of the TFCF to improve collection efficiency of adult salmonids and better handle sediment loads. WDFW has received legislative funding for the design phase of this project, including pass-through funding to USACE, and will be pursuing legislative funding for its share of the construction costs as well in future biennia. Construction is currently planned for 2025. Post-construction operations are planned to occur 12 months per year, as a result staffing and operational maintenance needs for the facility are expected to increase. In the interim, operational funds are needed to maintain status quo operations, September through May, of the facility.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

The proposal is an alteration of current services provided by the Department’s Fish Health Unit, mass-marking for hatcheries statewide, and staffing at the Toutle Fish Collection Facility.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, for 4.6 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions totals \$493,000, in fiscal year (FY) 2024 and 5.6 FTE and \$588,000 in FY 2025 and increases 1 FTE each year thereafter as each new auto trailer is purchased. Goods and services, object E, include \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year, as well as central agency costs. Additional object E expenditures in FY 2024 and ongoing for: 1) Aquaculture Coordinator continued education cost of \$5,000 to obtain and maintain all required certifications and licenses for this position, and additional supplies of \$15,200 (staff field gear, microscopes, lab and field supplies); and 2) Tootle Fish Collection Facility ground maintenance, staff gear and supplies, and utilities to produce more hatchery fish of \$17,882.

Travel costs, object G, totals \$67,000 in FY 2024 and \$92,000 in FY 2025. \$6,000 for flatbed and miles associated with hatchery fish releases,

and \$61,000 associated with vehicle lease, mileage, hotel and meals (details provided below). Equipment cost, object J, totals \$1,568,000 per fiscal year, includes \$1,433,000 Marking Auto Trailer, and \$135,000 in sales tax at 9.4%. Finally, an infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Fish Health – Travel totals \$19,000 each fiscal year ongoing

Aquaculture Coordinator – Travel costs per fiscal year total \$18,714. Assumed to travel 10,000 miles per year for a total vehicle cost of \$6,884, including vehicle rent and mileage, and 70 travel days per year totaling \$11,830 for hotel and per diem costs.

Total vehicle cost per fiscal year totals \$6,884, including vehicle rent and mileage. A DES long-term vehicle rental for a “SUV-Small-4X4” totals \$4,284 (\$357 per month x 12 months) and mileage costs total \$2,600 (10,000 x \$0.26 per mile).

Hotel and per diem costs total \$11,830 per fiscal year based on total overnight trips and corresponding meal per diem rate [(\$110/day hotel x 70 overnights = \$7,700) and (\$59 meal rate per day x 70 travel status days = \$4,130)].

Toutle Fish Collection Facility – Travel totals \$6,000 each fiscal year ongoing

Total travel costs for WDFW state owned 1 Ton 4x4 flatbed truck with 500-gallon mounted steel tank needed for hatchery fish releases, totals \$6,250 per year. Assumed to travel 9,500 miles per fiscal year for total mileage costs of \$4,275. An additional \$2,000 is needed for yearly maintenance costs, including brake replacement, routine oil and filter changes, and other ad hoc items, such as wipers, bulbs, and fluids, to maintain vehicle in a safe operational state.

AutoFish System Transition – Travel totals \$42,000 in fiscal year 2024 and increases \$25,776 annually

Maintenance Mechanic 3 – Assumed to travel 12,000 miles per year base and additionally will take ten two-day trips, half to Spokane and half to Sequim for a total vehicle cost of \$11,200 per year, including rent and fuel. The hotel and per diem costs total \$4,532 for 20 days travel. Total travel for this FTE is \$15,732.

A DES long-term vehicle rental “Truck-1/2T-4X4-Crew” totals \$5,304 in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing (\$442 per month x 12). Fuel for base travel totals \$4,320 (12,000 x \$0.36 per mile). Travel costs for overnight trips - including hotel (\$2,312), per diem (\$2,220), and fuel (\$1,576) - totals \$6,108.

- Spokane trips: Fuel for five two-day trips totals \$1,180.80 per year (3,280 miles roundtrip x \$0.36 per mile). Spokane hotel totals \$1,140 (\$114 per day x 2 days per trip x 5 trips). Meal per diem totals \$1,100 (\$74 meal rate x 3 days x 5 trips).
- Sequim trips: Fuel for five two-day trips totals \$396 per year (1,100 miles roundtrip x \$0.36 per mile). Hotel costs for two different seasons in Sequim totals \$1,172. Two two-day trips in July and August totals \$548 (\$137 per day x 4 days), and three two-day trips totals \$624 (\$104 per day x 6 days). Meal per diem totals \$1,100 (\$74 meal rate x 3 days x 5 trips).

Fish and Wildlife Biologist 2 (Bio2) trailer operator - Travel costs for this FTE in fiscal year 2024 total \$25,776. Assumed to travel 12,000 miles per fiscal year for a total vehicle cost of \$8,796, including vehicle rent and fuel, and 120 total travel days per year totaling \$16,980 for hotel and per diem costs. In fiscal year 2025, one additional Bio2 FTE is needed bringing the total to \$51,552. Each fiscal year thereafter, one additional Bio2 FTE is needed to support the new auto trailer purchased each fiscal year.

Total vehicle cost for the Bio2 in fiscal year 2024 totals \$8,796, including vehicle rent and fuel. A DES long-term vehicle rental for a “Truck-Small-4X4” totals \$4,836 (\$403 per month x 12) and fuel costs total \$3,960 (12,000 x \$0.33 per mile). In fiscal year 2025, one additional Bio2 FTE is needed bringing the total vehicle costs to \$17,592. With one additional Bio2 FTE needed to support each new auto trailer purchased, total vehicle costs will increase by \$8,796 each fiscal year.

Travel costs for the Bio2 in fiscal year 2024 totals \$16,980. Overnight trips, and corresponding meal per diem, total \$15,210 [(\$110/day hotel x 90 overnights = \$9,900) and (\$59 meal rate per day x 90 travel status days = \$5,310)]. Travel costs for single day trips, not requiring overnight stays, total \$1,770 (\$59 meal rate per day x 30 travel status days). In fiscal year 2025, one additional Bio2 FTE is needed bringing the travel costs to \$33,960. With one additional Bio2 FTE needed to support each new auto trailer purchased, total travel costs will increase by \$16,980 each fiscal year.

Workforce Assumptions:

Fish Health

Job classification and the associated work for 1.0 FTE are as follows:

1.0 FTE EPIDEMIOLOGIST 3 (NON-MEDICAL) position will be stationed in Olympia. Duties include supervision of four veterinarians and four pathologists; senior aquatic veterinarian for WDFW responsible for bridging clinical work and fish health related policies and management actions; statewide inspections of commercial aquaculture facilities; review and evaluate all finfish aquaculture permits; review and sign where appropriate finfish transport permits; clinical work at a specific set of hatcheries; provide back-up veterinary services statewide; lead a yet-to-be formed committee that establishes a working list of statewide regulated finfish pathogens; participate local, state, national, and international fish health and aquaculture committees. Travel associated with supervisory responsibilities for fish health field operations and inspections of commercial aquaculture facilities.

AutoFish System Transition

Job classifications and associated work for 3.0 FTE in fiscal year 2024, 4.0 FTE in fiscal year 2025, and one additional FTE each year thereafter are as follows:

1.0 FTE FISH & WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST 2 position(s) will be stationed in Olympia as Auto trailer operator(s), adding one additional staff person each year as new auto trailers are purchased. Trailers will be purchased and delivered annually, so fiscal year 2025 staff need is 2.0 FTE, 2026 is 3.0 FTE, etc.

1.0 FTE FISH & WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST 3 position will travel statewide to provide training to AutoFish operators and conduct quality control checks at the hatchery facilities.

1.0 FTE MAINTENANCE TECHICIAN position will travel statewide to provide maintenance (both scheduled and unscheduled) on the equipment to keep operations running and to ensure that the fleet is well maintained.

Toutle Fish Collection Facility

Job classification and the associated work for 0.6 FTE are as follows:

0.1 FTE SCIENTIFIC TECHNICIAN 3 position will be stationed out of the Cowlitz Trout Hatchery. Duties include scheduling operations and staff, as well as participation in operation of the facility (fish sampling, flushing facility of sediment, and transport of adults to release sites above the SRS).

0.1 FTE FISH HATCHERY SPECIALIST 3 position will be stationed at the Green River Hatchery. Duties include site security and standby.

0.1 FTE FISH & WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST 3 positions will be stationed out of the Cowlitz Trout Hatchery. Duties include admin functions and oversight of operations.

0.3 FTE SCIENTIFIC TECHNICIAN 2 position will be stationed out of the Cowlitz Trout Hatchery. Duties include operations of the facility (fish sampling, flushing facility of sediment, and transport of adults to release sites above the SRS).

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve the Results Washington goal of a Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment. This proposal is fundamental to the harvest management and recovery of ESA-listed Salmon and Steelhead in Puget Sound, the Washington Coast and Columbia River.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This decision package supports the following Department Strategic Plan priorities:

- Engage communities through recreation and stewardship, delivering hunting and fishing customer service, including needs for predictability, as the Department continues to focus on maintaining healthy fish and wildlife populations.
- Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions, developing an agency-level data management system to provide better science for agency decision-making and constituent outreach.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Produce Hatchery Fish 4.6 FTE \$2,401,000 in fiscal year 2024 and 5.6 FTE \$2,569,000 in fiscal year 2025, General Fund State

This package supports our activity inventory item "Produce Hatchery Fish" and applicable support strategy:

- Produce salmon and steelhead

The Department operates 80 hatcheries for fish production that benefit commercial and recreational fisheries and fulfill obligations to maintain tribal usual and accustomed fishing rights. Production at hatcheries is conducted consistent with ESA requirements and hatchery reform goals. This activity includes the entire fish production cycle for salmon and steelhead, raising fish from eggs until release age, sometimes transporting them to their release location, and then collecting more eggs upon their return.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve two 25-year Performance goals:

- 25 percent increase in wild salmon populations
- 90 percent of the public reports trusting WDFW to do what is right for the fish and wildlife management in our state.

In addition, this proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Hatchery programs in compliance with ESA
- Mark-selective fisheries
- Mass marked hatchery produced Chinook salmon
- Salmon hatchery recommendations
- Mass marked hatchery produced coho salmon

The Fish Health Unit will be able to provide comprehensive fish health services for Washington State Hatcheries and fulfill legal obligations for commercial aquaculture. This will also help the Department meet the demands of climate change and other environmental factors with regards to veterinarians providing adequate care for fish reared in the hatchery environment.

Funding the purchase of AutoFish systems will allow WDFW to continue to produce and release hatchery fish at current and expanded levels.

Adequate staffing will allow the Department to meet current operational requirements for the TFCF and maintain the current 9-month operational period that allows for transport of all ESA listed coho salmon and steelhead historically present above the SRS.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The Department's hatcheries provide fisheries that people depend upon for jobs (commercial fishing and related industries), meet federal treaty obligations, provide additional forage for southern resident orcas, support local economies (tourism, lodging, restaurants, wholesalers and retailers of recreational equipment, boats, and licenses), provide family recreational opportunities, and protect Washington's fishing cultural heritage. Recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state contribute significant revenue to local and rural businesses, as well as WDFW, through license sales. Most of the salmon production at WDFW owned hatcheries is linked to conservation, harvest augmentation (tribal and non-tribal) and federal court agreements.

The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain these functions to ensure there is not degradation services to the communities we serve.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

It is expected that there are few, if any, disproportionate impacts from this proposal. However, if this proposal does not receive funding, there could be disproportionate impacts to those who rely on hatchery fish for their subsistence, economic welfare, and recreation if hatchery fish become ill and WDFW does not have enough staff to thoroughly address the issue. There is a strong possibility of disproportional impacts if this proposal isn't funded as WDFW has recently been having trouble filling contract positions for fin clipping. When that happens, there are less fish available for tribal fishing, along with commercial and recreational fishing.

Target Populations or Communities:

This proposal will help maintain and increase fish health and mass fin clipping, leading to more adult fish availability for tribal fishing. Commercial and recreational fishers could also be positively impacted by this proposal.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is directly aligned with Action (ID# 205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity, continue to implement increased state and tribal hatchery production to support prey availability for Southern Resident Orca by increasing WDFW's hatchery capacity to produce recreational and commercial harvest, tribal harvest, Southern Resident orca prey, and catalyze conservation efforts for wild salmonids through increased pathogen monitoring, fish marking to meet regulatory requirements, and facilities operation. The Treaty Tribes and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) co- manage hatchery production and salmon harvest allocations in Washington State. This decision package is also indirectly aligned Action (ID#206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by increasing WDFW's hatchery salmon production through increased pathogen monitoring, fish marking to meet regulatory requirements, and facilities operation and staff. Through these efforts this decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria: support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan, directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 6: Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy Recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery

This decision package is necessary to support the ongoing Fisheries and Hatcheries Science Management which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies 15 Salmon Recovery, 17 responsible boating, 22 outdoor recreation and stewardship, 24 cultural practices and local foods, 25 economic benefits, and 26 Human Health.

State Workforce Impacts:

Additional staff positions are associated with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Professionals.

Intergovernmental:

Fish health, adult collection, and mass-marking have been long-standing desires among tribal co-managers. As salmon and steelhead populations continue to decline, having strong fish health policies and procedures are critical. Additionally, mass-marking salmon and steelhead intended for harvest inform decision making when crafting fishing opportunities for all users as well as providing opportunities for sport and tribal anglers. Support for Hatchery Investment Strategy efforts will be strong from tribal co-managers and federal partners overseeing implementation of fishery and hatchery management for conservation. Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission would also be in support of measures taken to sustain fish health.

Stakeholder Response:

Fishing constituents will be supportive of efforts that lead to increased opportunities on salmon and steelhead by maintaining current production levels. WDFW risks losing the support of the recreational fishing community if it reduces fishing opportunities because fish are unable to be mass marked.

State Facilities Impacts:

It is anticipated that positions can be absorbed into existing facilities.

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$359	\$426	\$785	\$492	\$559	\$1,051
Obj. B	\$134	\$162	\$296	\$189	\$217	\$406
Obj. E	\$65	\$71	\$136	\$68	\$74	\$142
Obj. G	\$67	\$92	\$159	\$118	\$144	\$262
Obj. J	\$1,568	\$1,568	\$3,136	\$1,568	\$1,568	\$3,136
Obj. T	\$208	\$250	\$458	\$291	\$333	\$624

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (WDFW) volunteer program engages community members in meaningful service that helps to protect fish, wildlife, and their habitat, and provide sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities. WDFW lacks the necessary volunteer coordination to meet the demand for volunteer opportunities, which limits our ability to engage additional volunteers and develop new partnerships. Dedicated volunteer coordinators in each of WDFW’s six regions and a community science coordinator would allow us to expand volunteer opportunities by 25%, increase volunteer hours by 50%, and improve volunteer retention rate by 10%. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$1,157	\$1,157	\$2,314	\$1,157	\$1,157	\$2,314
Total Expenditures	\$1,157	\$1,157	\$2,314	\$1,157	\$1,157	\$2,314

Decision Package Description

WDFW volunteers report an average of 60,000 hours of donated labor each year. This is valued at \$1.8 million per year (see Attachment A) and is the equivalent of about 28 FTEs. Volunteers contribute to the Department in a wide variety of ways. For example, they serve as hunter education instructors, advisory group members, hatchery tour guides, and field coordinators for special hunts. They collect data, support species monitoring, protect against invasive species, help maintain water access areas, help maintain wildlife areas and facilities, restore habitat, complete routine hatchery duties, and assist our conflict specialists with herding, hazing, and other strategies designed to reduce property damage and/or public safety problems posed by wildlife.

Currently, our volunteer program consists of one permanent full-time employee, a Statewide Volunteer Coordinator, who is responsible for planning, developing, and implementing the program and providing support to all Department volunteer supervisors and volunteers. Five region-based Hunter Education Coordinators also perform volunteer project coordination as 25% of their assigned duties.

This proposal addresses the following service gaps, which the Department has identified as barriers to program growth and participation:

We are unable to meet the public demand, both from prospective volunteers as well as partners, for additional volunteer opportunities.

We need staffing support to adopt a more organized approach to volunteer outreach to build and enhance our working relationships with our partners in the communities we serve. Often, eager and enthusiastic partners don’t have a local Department point of contact for organizing and coordinating volunteer efforts.

We need better coordination and logistics support for Department staff who work directly with volunteers. In addition to developing, implementing, and supervising volunteer opportunities, they’re also responsible for coordinating (including recruiting, screening, onboarding, training, and scheduling) the volunteers with whom they work. In many cases, this additional workload is a deterrent to working with volunteers.

We want to expand our volunteer program to harness prospective volunteers’ innovation and creativity. Many of our volunteers have specialized skills, abilities, and/or talents. However, we generally recruit volunteers to “fill a seat” based on our immediate needs. By doing so we’re missing the opportunity to assess and benefit from the additional skills, abilities, and talents that our volunteers bring to the table.

We want to create and implement a formal system for identifying and developing less physically strenuous opportunities for volunteers who wouldn’t otherwise be able to participate.

We want to develop and implement a more formal approach to volunteer recognition.

If funded, this proposal will provide six Volunteer Coordinator FTEs to increase and expand volunteerism and other public engagement opportunities throughout the Department, and one Community Science Coordinator FTE devoted to coordinating community science initiatives.

Volunteer Coordinators will:

- Identify and develop strategic volunteer opportunities to better meet public demand. They will be responsible for learning, understanding, and assessing a given region's programs, projects, and priorities and identifying and developing appropriate volunteer opportunities based on that knowledge.
- Implement an organized approach to volunteer outreach in each of WDFW's six regions across Washington state. They will serve as a primary point of contact and liaison between partners and the Department.
- Support volunteer supervisors with volunteer management and coordination, including recruiting, screening, onboarding, training, and scheduling.
- Develop and implement strategies to harness the potential of our volunteer force
- Volunteer Coordinators will work with staff in their assigned region to identify, develop, implement, and track volunteer hours that can be used as in-kind grant match.
- Work within their region to identify, develop, and implement low-impact volunteer opportunities for volunteers seeking less physically strenuous ways to volunteer.
- Work with the Statewide Volunteer Coordinator to develop a statewide approach to volunteer recognition; develop and implement formal, on-going recognition of volunteers at regional scale.

The Community Science Coordinator will help develop and implement community science led efforts to support data collection efforts for Washington's 268 Species of Greatest Conservation Need by developing survey protocols and working with Volunteer Coordinators to enlist and train volunteers to carry out surveys.

Alternatives explored

Additional volunteer coordination capacity would most efficiently address the service gaps outlined in this proposal. We have not determined any reasonable alternatives that would meet our program needs. Maintaining the status quo would result in continued lost opportunity and likely increased frustration from prospective volunteers and partners.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This proposal is an expansion of an existing program. This funding will add six Volunteer Coordinator FTEs and one Community Science Coordinator FTE to the Department. Currently, there is only one Statewide Volunteer Coordinator FTE.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, for 7 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions totals \$657,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2024 and ongoing. Goods and services, object E, include \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, and subscription costs. Due to the high public engagement of these positions, an additional; \$1,000 per FTE, per year, for trainings such as CPR and trainings on public engagement.

\$117,000 per year for volunteer recognition program, field supplies, printing costs, community science outreach supplies, and translation costs.

Travel costs, object G, totals \$43,000 in FY 2024 and ongoing as calculated below.

Travel costs include pool vehicle use and mileage for 7 vehicles, 96 days per year each, an average of 60 miles per trip at \$0.17 per mile for a total mileage cost of \$6,854. One staff position will be based out of Olympia and will rent a fleet vehicle at a rate of \$30 per day for a total rental cost of \$2,880. Six regional staff will use existing long-term leased vehicles based in their regional offices for a total rental cost of \$9,383 (\$353 per month x 12 months / 260 workdays a year = \$16.29 per day x 96 days x 6 FTEs). Vehicle rental costs for all seven staff will total \$12,263.

Also included in object G is per diem for 7 staff, for 10 nights and 20 days per year to attend meetings, trainings, and events. Estimated distance for overnight stays is 200 miles roundtrip at a rate of \$0.17 per mile. Vehicle rental and mileage costs for regional staff using existing long-term leased vehicles and Olympia-based staff leasing a vehicle at a daily rate totals \$4,935.

Per diem rates and hotel fees vary by location and time of year. Estimates for each staff is \$1,734 for 10 nights of hotel stays (\$173.40/stay) and per diem meals of \$980 (\$49 per day – 20 travel days and assuming some days will be partial travel days). \$2,714 per staff X 7 = \$18,998.

An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classification and associated work for 7 FTEs are as follows:

6.0 FTE Community Outreach and Environmental Education Specialist 3 positions, one per region, responsible for increasing and expanding volunteerism and other public engagement opportunities throughout their assigned region.

1.0 FTE Community Outreach and Environmental Education Specialist 4 position responsible for coordinating community science initiatives.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package directly supports the state's ability to achieve two Results Washington goals: 1) World-Class Education; and 3) Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment.

This proposal creates educational opportunities and work experiences for students, job seekers, and lifelong learners across the state. It also increases the capacity for Department volunteers and partners to work collaboratively, building a legacy of resource stewardship.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This decision package directly supports the Department's 25-Year Strategic Plan strategy "Engage Communities Through Recreation and Stewardship," near-term action 10- Improve Community Science and near-term action 11- Expand WDFW's volunteer program, in concert with partners.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Business Management and Obligations, 7.0 FTE and \$1,157,000 in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing, General Fund- State.

This package supports our activity inventory item "Business Management and Obligations" by having six Regional Volunteer Coordinators supporting regional staff in volunteer recruitment, management, and record keeping, more staff would likely utilize volunteers. The addition of a Community Science Coordinator will provide data on for Washington's 268 Species of Greatest Conservation Need to the WDFW Science Divisions.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal directly supports the Department's ability to achieve the following performance outcome:

- Volunteer Hours

Anticipated outcomes include:

- 50% increase in volunteer hours
- 25% increase in number of volunteer opportunities
- Increase amount of grant match available by 50%.
- Increase volunteer retention rate from 30% to 40%.

In addition, this proposal impacts many other performance outcomes as volunteers bring additional support to efforts throughout the Department.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

This proposal creates a more equitable program by providing a designated point of contact and resource for all interested individuals, groups, and organizations throughout each region. It plays a key role in identifying barriers to participation and creating and implementing strategies to mitigate and/or eliminate barriers. For instance, it provides the resources needed to develop and implement a formal “light-duty” program for volunteers who need less physically strenuous ways to volunteer. It provides resources to assess and accommodate local preferences and priorities when appropriate.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Constituents throughout the state will benefit from this proposal. It is expected that there are few, if any, disproportionate impacts. However, if this proposal does not receive funding, there could be disproportionate impacts in some of the individual regions across the state that would see immediate impacts from this outreach effort.

Target Populations or Communities:

This proposal provides benefits to a wide variety of populations and communities by adding staff capacity and supporting resources, including six regional volunteer coordinators and a statewide community science coordinator.

These new positions will provide support to families and educators in schools throughout the state by bringing an added capacity to support school habitat projects, volunteer opportunities, field trips, and community science projects in urban and rural areas. Added volunteer opportunities can provide real-world work experience for young people or those looking to make a career transition and introduce people to jobs in the natural resources field. Exposure to WDFW staff and our work can facilitate development of a career pathway for students and increase future diversity of WDFW staff while also promoting science, land management, information technology, and communications as career options.

Additional benefits of these new positions would include an increased awareness of natural resource conservation for Washington residents and more opportunities to connect with nature, which offers a variety of health benefits for vulnerable populations. With added volunteer coordination support, there will be enhanced communications and outreach to promote fishing and hunting opportunities and to help people address barriers they may have to participation, including mentorships, access, equipment, etc. These skills can help support people to have sustainable, healthy, locally sourced protein to feed themselves and their families.

This proposal will also help to preserve economic and cultural opportunities in rural areas that significantly benefit from fishing, hunting, and related recreational and commercial industries. Added volunteer opportunities and engagement will support local tourism, lodging, restaurants, wholesalers, and retailers of recreational equipment, boats and licenses. The increased local coordination capacity will help improve public access to WDFW-managed water access areas and wildlife areas due to increased volunteer support to keep these facilities clean, safe, and accessible for the public. Surrounding communities of WDFW-managed lands and facilities will have a more positive outlook of the Department and will be more likely to support our work when they see direct benefits to their local community and opportunities.

Added staff capacity will also allow the Department to increase level of partnership with state Tribal governments. The Department would be interested in pursuing co-hosted volunteer opportunities to benefit Tribal lands and members as well as Washington's biodiversity.

This proposal would support increasing volunteer opportunities for people who do not speak English as their first language. Resources will be available to support translation and interpretation needs. Increasing the scope and scale of volunteer opportunities will allow for more volunteer options for people with physical limitations, families, community service project requirements, etc.

Finally, increasing the number of volunteers would also benefit fish and wildlife habitat, thereby improving water quality, air quality, and biodiversity in Washington, all of which are critical to public health and the state's economy.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22: Outdoor Recreation, and Stewardship and Strategy E: Stewardship and Motivating Action, by encouraging increased access to information and opportunities for public volunteer engagement in outdoor stewardship in Puget Sound. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Action Develop, fund,

and promote culturally relevant projects and programs to encourage and incentivize behavior changes that will protect, restore, and enable responsible enjoyment and stewardship of Puget Sound (ID #159) by increasing the number of support staff managing volunteer programs that will accelerate local engagement to protect fish, wildlife, and their habitat, and provide sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities. This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy E Action (ID #127) Build social and institutional infrastructure that supports stewardship behaviors and removes barriers by implementing two key opportunities, allocating funding to build the capacity of residents and community-based organizations to engage in stewardship behaviors, and bolstering and expanding voluntary environmental programs for local businesses and private landowners, particularly those owned by vulnerable populations and underserved communities, by increasing the capacity of WDFW to support regionally relevant volunteer programs that advance recovery goals and stewardship.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C Research and Monitoring by increasing WDFW's capacity for monitoring and assessment and through volunteer conservation programs. This decision package is directly aligned Action (ID # 122) Coordinate efforts to assess and report on ecosystem conditions and the effectiveness of ecosystem recovery strategies and actions by implementing key opportunity, ensure that local, long-term, and inherently efficient volunteer monitoring programs are well funded, maintained, regionally respected, and designed to offer the added benefit of educating and involving the public by increasing the number of support staff managing volunteer programs that will accelerate local engagement to protect fish, wildlife, and their habitat, and provide sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities.

This decision package fulfills the Secondary Criteria Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 8 to strengthen science, monitoring and accountability, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 35, to conduct research, science and monitoring to inform decision-making, adaptive management and implementation of actions to recover Southern Residents, by implementing community science led efforts to support data collection efforts for Washington's 268 Species of Greatest Conservation Need which includes several regionally relevant salmon species and orcas.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

Region-based volunteer coordination and a dedicated Community Science Coordinator will increase communication and opportunities for collaboration with other state agencies, tribal governments, and local governments.

This proposal is consistent with recommendations made in How State Government Can Better Invest in Volunteers (see Attachment B). This report was a result of Substitute Senate Bill 5265 (Chapter 45, Laws of 2019). We anticipate strong support for this proposal.

Stakeholder Response:

Region-based volunteer coordination and a dedicated Community Science Coordinator will increase communication and opportunities for collaboration with individual volunteers as well as community-based/local groups and organizations. We anticipate strong support for this proposal.

State Facilities Impacts:

It is anticipated that these new positions can be absorbed into existing facilities, particularly with the advancement of agencywide telework options.

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

Reference Documents

- [Attachment_A_Value_of_Volunteer_Hour.pdf](#)
- [Attachment_B_How_State-Government_Can_Better_Invest_In_Volunteers.pdf](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$466	\$466	\$932	\$466	\$466	\$932
Obj. B	\$191	\$191	\$382	\$191	\$191	\$382
Obj. E	\$166	\$166	\$332	\$166	\$166	\$332
Obj. G	\$43	\$43	\$86	\$43	\$43	\$86
Obj. T	\$291	\$291	\$582	\$291	\$291	\$582

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Agency Recommendation Summary

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is already experiencing climate change impacts, which will continue to get worse over the coming decades. This package will increase capacity to continue to fulfill four aspects of the Department’s mission most vulnerable to climate change: (1) guide species recovery efforts, (2) provide harvest and recreation opportunities, (3) provide technical assistance, permitting, and planning support, and (4) manage agency lands and infrastructure. ‘Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW’ is designed to address these four vulnerabilities through investments in research, capacity building, community engagement, evaluation, and monitoring across WDFW’s projects and programs. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	11.3	12.3	11.8	12.3	12.3	12.3
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$2,829	\$2,477	\$5,306	\$1,933	\$1,933	\$3,866
Total Expenditures	\$2,829	\$2,477	\$5,306	\$1,933	\$1,933	\$3,866

Decision Package Description

WDFW is developing a holistic response to climate change that spans two related but distinct categories: 1) building resilience to and preparing for the impacts of a changing climate and 2) reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. WDFW is putting forth a decision package for each of these two categories (see “Building a Carbon-Neutral WDFW” decision package). This package, 'Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW', focuses on preparing WDFW for the inevitable impacts of climate change. These two packages are coordinated, additive, and support distinct activities and outcomes. Both packages should be funded for WDFW to pursue the urgent actions necessary to both reduce and prepare for climate change.

A changing climate is already affecting WDFW’s operations and facilities. Increasing stream temperatures and low summer flows have resulted in fish die-offs and fishing closures along rivers. Declines in snowpack and wildfires have damaged critical habitat and pose significant management challenges for many threatened or endangered species. Continuing climate change trends are expected to exacerbate these and other climate-related impacts, further challenging the agency’s ability to fulfill its mission to “preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities.”

In 2021, WDFW released the report ‘[Preparing WDFW for a Changing Climate: Assessing Risks and Opportunities for Action](#)’, which identified four aspects of WDFW’s mission considered most vulnerable to climate-related impacts: (1) Risks to Species Conservation and Recovery; (2) Risks to Harvest and Recreation; (3) Risks to Providing Effective Technical Assistance, Permitting, Research and Planning; and (4) Risks to WDFW Lands and Infrastructure.

‘Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW’ decision package is designed to address these four vulnerabilities through investments in integrated research, capacity building, engagement, evaluation, and monitoring across WDFW’s projects, programs, and activities (Figure 1). Specifically, this decision package will work to fulfill the following objectives:

1. Meet species conservation and recovery goals in the face of climate change.
2. Provide harvest and recreation opportunities to Washingtonians under a changing climate.
3. Provide effective technical assistance, permitting, research, and planning that account for projected changes in climate.
4. Increase the resilience of WDFW’s lands and infrastructure to the observed and projected impacts of climate change.

In the 2020 supplemental operating budget (Chapter 357, Laws of 2020), the Legislature directed the Office of Financial Management to develop a prioritized list of actions and investments that mitigate the effects of climate change.¹ While this report acknowledges that state investments have supported climate resilience in Washington, climate resilience was not the primary focus of these investments. The OFM 2021 report states “the overall priority [for state investments in climate resilience] should be to support foundational work that provides state agencies the science, data, and institutional capacity to incorporate climate resilience in their projects, programs and activities”. The report acknowledges that “relying solely on existing programs and priorities will be insufficient for meeting the climate resilience challenge. If investments in existing programs don’t consider how future risks are changing, investments may be less effective, create a false sense of risk reduction, or even be

ineffective.”

This 'Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW' proposal is directly in line with the climate resilience investment recommendations from the 2021 OFM report. This proposal will support development and application of climate science and data and fund the institutional capacity needed to incorporate climate resilience into agency projects, programs, and activities.

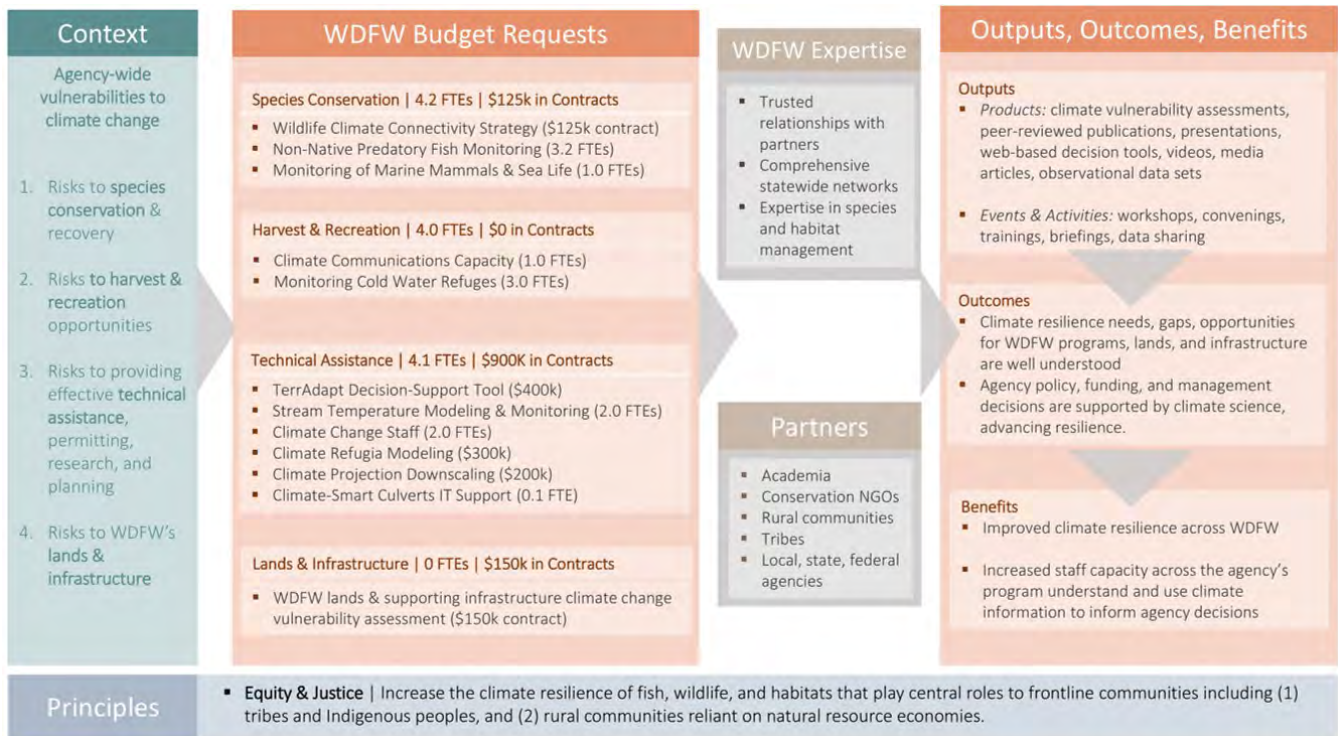


Figure 1. The 'Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW' proposal for advancing climate resilience in Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

1. Species Conservation

With dozens of species classified as state-endangered, -threatened, or -sensitive, WDFW is tasked with guiding recovery efforts for many at-risk fish and wildlife species. The historical drivers that led to species becoming at-risk were often not climate-related, but rather reflected the legacy of present-day human activities and land use (e.g., native habitat conversion, overharvest, pollution, habitat fragmentation, etc.). Increasingly, climate change is becoming an additional stressor that is raising the extinction risk for many species. For climate-sensitive species (i.e., species that are adapted to a relatively narrow range of climatic conditions and therefore vulnerable to a changing climate) that are already at-risk, this will make meeting recovery goals even more difficult and costly. 'Building a Climate Resilient WDFW' will reduce climate vulnerabilities to species conservation through the following efforts:

Wildlife Climate Connectivity Strategy

Washington's terrestrial ecosystems and the species that inhabit them are projected to experience ongoing shifts in geographic ranges and compositions. As the climate continues to change, the diverse wildlife species that populate Washington's landscape are adapting by adjusting their ranges to inhabit areas with more suitable conditions and habitats. However, the ability of these species to persist and migrate is likely to be limited by the inability of species to move quickly enough to keep pace with climate change and the presence of movement barriers from human land use (e.g., highways, farms, fences, cities). As a result, increasing habitat connectivity across the landscape is one of the most effective climate adaptation strategies for biodiversity conservation, by facilitating species adaptive movement across the landscape. The 'Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW' decision package will support the development of a 'Washington State Habitat Climate Connectivity Strategy', a shared document which will allow WDFW, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and other partners to collaboratively plan for connectivity in Washington by focusing on 1) conserving areas that facilitate species movement, and 2) mitigating barriers that impede

species movement. This strategy will provide WDFW, WSDOT, and partners a clear path for maintaining and preserving the most important connectivity locations, through identification and prioritization of both geographic areas and projects (e.g., crossing structures, land protection), across Washington. This proposal will also help the agencies achieve existing priorities and strategies, including WDFW's 25-Year Strategic Plan and WSDOT's Secretary's [Executive Order #E 1031.02.10](#). Further, it will bring Washington into the fold of other western states working to conserve and enhance connectivity through similar strategies.

Non-Native Predatory Fish Project

Land-use-driven reductions in riparian stream shading, in combination with rising stream temperatures, have led to significant reductions in high-quality salmon habitat. In addition to stressing cold water fish, warming streams enable non-native warmwater fish species (e.g., bass, walleye, and pike) to inhabit streams and rivers that have historically been too cold. These warmwater species are competitors with and predators of native species, including salmon and steelhead. Non-native predatory fish present a significant challenge to the survival of threatened salmon populations. Additional monitoring is needed to identify trends in non-native fish species to inform management responses and areas where treatments are necessary. 'Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW' will support 3.2 FTEs. This will increase WDFW's monitoring capacity, to help WDFW better understand how native fish species are responding to on-going shifts in stream temperature, streamflow, and location shifts of non-native predatory fish.

Monitoring of Marine Mammals and Sea Life

Climate driven changes in ocean conditions are impacting the migratory and residency patterns of many marine mammals and other species that utilize Washington's coast and inland marine waters. Increased monitoring will help improve the agency's understanding of changes in timing and distribution of threatened and endangered marine species like humpback whales, blue whales, and leatherback turtles. This monitoring will also improve the agency's understanding of entanglement risk and the rate of unobserved occurrence of entanglements in state-managed fisheries, facilitating more informed dynamic management under a changing climate. Enhanced monitoring is also critical to obtaining and maintaining our incidental take permit(s) from the National Marine Fisheries Service for continued management and operation of the high-value commercial Dungeness crab fishery, as well as other fixed-gear fisheries for which such a permit may be necessary. 'Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW' will support a research scientist in WDFW's Ocean Policy team to design, analyze, and support implementation of an entanglement risk and bycatch monitoring program to support cross program marine wildlife recovery efforts and marine fisheries planning under 1) a changing climate, and 2) an operating Conservation Plan designed to avoid, minimize, and mitigate marine life entanglements in state-managed fishing gear. This enhanced monitoring program contributes to updates of the best available science informing species distribution models under a changing climate. It will also provide fishery managers with critical tools and metrics needed to adequately track, avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts of state-managed fisheries on Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species. Already important to secure an incidental take permit, these will become increasingly valuable as the need for adaptive management of fisheries grows with changing ocean conditions.

2. Harvest and Recreation Opportunities

WDFW provides access for hunting, fishing, and wildlife-related recreation throughout the state. These activities occur primarily across the one million acres of WDFW-managed lands and waters throughout the state. Wildfire and smoke, warming streams, snowpack declines and altered hydrology, ocean acidification, sea level rise, and resulting shifts in the distribution of species and the habitats that support them are likely to impact WDFW's ability to provide harvest and recreation opportunities to Washingtonians. This decision package will increase WDFW's ability to continue to provide harvest and recreation opportunities in the face of climate change through the following efforts:

Climate Communications Capacity

WDFW has a long history of providing angling, hunting, and wildlife viewing opportunities to the public. A key goal of [WDFW's 25-year Strategic Plan](#) is to better inform and engage the public and WDFW's passionate constituencies in climate action through recreation and stewardship. The 'Building a Climate-Resilience WDFW' decision package will support a communications consultant position who will develop and maintain an externally facing climate communications program, including website, social media, outreach, and leveraging existing WDFW communications capabilities, platform functionalities, and audiences. The communications consultant will support portfolio- and project-specific external climate-focused communications and co-create, with community partners, accessible materials to inform constituencies around WDFW's body of climate work.

Monitoring Cold Water Refuges

WDFW manages salmon and steelhead to meet conservation goals through stock assessment activities – the process of collecting and analyzing

demographic information to determine changes in the abundance of fishery stocks. The information is used annually to set commercial and recreational salmon fisheries through international, national, and regional processes. Columbia River salmon and steelhead migrate to spawning grounds in mid-August, when mainstem river temperatures are the warmest. Salmon and steelhead swim into small pools of cooler water for temporary relief, called cold water refuges (CWRs). Despite past work on identifying locations of CWRs, some uncertainties remain in our knowledge of certain stocks' utilization of CWRs, and how the seasonal timing of the utilization overlaps with popular recreational fisheries. The 'Building a Climate-Resilience WDFW' decision package will support a Research Scientist to design and analyze fishery surveys for Columbia River CWRs and two Scientific Technicians to implement the surveys during key Columbia River fisheries to further improve our fishery impact estimates. Increased monitoring and analysis will help us better understand CWR utilization by salmon and steelhead now and in the future as stream temperatures continue to warm. This work will also improve certainty of ESA impact estimates in Columbia River fisheries, while simultaneously allowing managers to consider meaningful angling opportunities for healthy stocks.

3. Technical Assistance

WDFW provides technical assistance, permitting, research, and planning support to a broad array of stakeholders across the state, with the goal of ensuring industry, infrastructure, recreation, agriculture, forestry, and other human activities are compatible with healthy fish and wildlife populations. This includes guidance for managing our state's infrastructure, lands, and waters to protect fish and wildlife habitat, restoring habitat, as well as research and planning to support management of game species and recovery of at-risk species. Many of WDFW's research and planning activities are based on best practices derived from many decades of past experience. However, those practices were developed in an historical climate that is now changing rapidly. These shifting baselines and the high uncertainty around future conditions are making it increasingly challenging to provide effective guidance to stakeholders and make informed natural resource decisions across that account for projected changes in climate.

New tools and improved data management that enable managers to quantify and map locations of potential impacts to species, ecosystems, infrastructure and lands are needed to offer WDFW a spatially-explicit understanding of risks and opportunities and a means to prioritize areas for acquisition, restoration, or barrier removal. This 'Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW' decision package will increase WDFW's ability to provide effective technical assistance that accounts for projected changes in climate through the following efforts:

TerrAdapt Decision-Support Tool

A rapidly changing climate and expanding human footprint is driving increased rates of landscape change in Washington. This makes it challenging for WDFW staff to know if and to what extent recovery goals and conservation plans for at-risk species need to be modified to account for changing habitat conditions. Addressing this challenge requires accurate, up-to-date information about landscape change and how it affects the habitat and viability of at-risk species. As part of a long-term climate-resilient transboundary strategy, we will work with our partners to further co-develop and integrate [TerrAdapt](#) into adaptive management plans, enabling WDFW managers to better prioritize where conservation actions (e.g., protecting core habitat, restoring habitats post-disturbance, or mitigating key movement barriers) are implemented to maintain ecologically connected networks of habitat that support a thriving and resilient network of ecosystems across Washington. TerrAdapt is a novel dynamic spatial decision support system that uses the latest remote sensing, AI, and spatial analysis technologies powered by Google Earth Engine to monitor habitat conditions, project future impacts of climate change, and continuously revise spatial priorities accordingly. In this era of rapid and widespread environmental change, managers without access to up-to-date, climate-smart, and actionable spatial priorities risk investing scarce conservation resources in areas where they will be less impactful, resulting in a failure to adapt adequately or appropriately for our region's species and habitats.

Stream Temperature Modeling & Monitoring

Climate change is increasing stream temperature, especially in summer, as the result of low flows and high air temperatures. Temperature regulates metabolism, growth, and other processes related to fitness and survival of aquatic species. Changes in stream temperature also affects patterns of species distribution, abundance, and community structure. Monitoring stream temperature throughout Washington and generating maps (i.e., thermalscapes) of current and future (2040, 2080) stream temperature will inform restoration planning, identify areas for protection, and help better understand climate change threats to aquatic and semi-aquatic species. 'Building a Climate Resilient WDFW' will support the expansion of current stream temperature monitoring in coastal Washington (Outer Olympic Peninsula, Chehalis Basin, Willapa Bay) to other high priority watersheds statewide (e.g., Lower Columbia).² The work will also generate maps of projected stream temperatures under different climate change scenarios. This decision package will support two scientific technicians to collect samples and a biometrician to oversee sample design, analyze stream temperature data, and generate thermalscape maps across monitored watersheds. Monitoring and evaluating current and future stream temperature throughout Washington will help managers identify vulnerable areas and populations and help guide restoration efforts

to mitigate stream temperature increases to ensure sustainable populations into the future. This work will occur in collaboration with the [Coast Salmon Partnership](#) and the University of Washington.

Climate Change Staff

Funding for climate-focused positions is critical to ensuring WDFW maintains sufficient staff capacity to address climate change vulnerabilities and center climate resilience building efforts across the agency. The passage of a budget proviso by the Department of Commerce last session funded non-permanent project appointments for (1) a Climate Change Research Scientist 1 and (2) an Environmental Planner 5 at WDFW. The Climate Change Research Scientist 1 works to develop resources focusing on enhancing areas of vital habitat for safe passage, species migration, and climate resilience such as salmon recovery and ecosystem health services; and assembles and reviews existing scientific literature related to the effects of climate change on fish and wildlife and their habitat in Washington State. The Environmental Planner 5 works to ensure that guidance provided to local jurisdictions, pursuant to their Growth Management Act Comprehensive Plan updates, Critical Area Ordinances, Shoreline Management Act applications, and other efforts accounts for the impacts of climate change on fish, wildlife, and habitat affected by the planning processes. WDFW's depends on the retention and continuation of staff with the institutional capacity to strategically incorporate climate resilience in their programs to build resilience to climate change.

Climate Refugia Modeling

Impacts from climate change have already affected a wide range of species and habitats in Washington. These impacts are expected to continue and intensify in the coming years with significant implications for species management and conservation. To establish means to maximize protection of wildlife species from these impacts there is a need to identify locations on the landscape that may provide climate-change refugia -- locations where species are more likely to persist despite broader, regional climate changes. This project will investigate how these, and any other relevant datasets, could be used to better understand, prioritize, and manage climate-change refugia for specific species of management concern in Washington.

Climate Projection Downscaling

WDFW designs fish passage structures, such as culverts, and permits and provides technical guidance to hundreds of other entities annually, specifying how to build and install fish passable structures. In Washington, climate change is projected to exacerbate flood risks due to declining snowpack and more intense, heavy rains. These changes are projected to drive increases in peak stream flows and more severe flooding than have been observed historically. If the volume of water in the stream exceeds the capacity of a culvert, the well-being of both infrastructure and local fish populations are at risk. The expected service life of culverts is 50 to 100 years, so future as well as current streamflow must be considered in their design to ensure that they continue to function across their lifespan.

In response to these projected changes, WDFW has developed a climate-smart culvert tool³ that helps engineers and resource managers understand how the stream width at their project site may change in the future, and how culvert design should be modified to account for the projected change. The science of climate change will continue to evolve over time due to changes in greenhouse gas scenarios, global climate models, downscaling approaches, and the hydrologic modeling used to make localized streamflow projections. This funding will support further refinements to the existing approach used to generate streamflow projects and will result in improved model estimates of current and future conditions. Future work could also further refine the approaches used to develop meteorological forcings and tune the hydrologic model.⁴

4. WDFW Lands and Infrastructure

Climate change not only poses risks to WDFW operations, but also to the more than one million acres of WDFW-managed lands and supporting infrastructure (e.g., hatcheries, wildlife areas, water access areas, buildings, trails, etc.) the agency relies on to achieve its mission. Projected increases in flood risk, wildfire risk, sea level rise, expanding populations of invasive species and pathogens, and shifting vegetation and disturbance regimes have the potential to cause closures and diminish the value of WDFW-owned lands and put agency infrastructure at risk.

Vulnerability Assessment of WDFW Lands and Infrastructure

Understanding how climate change will affect WDFW's lands and supporting infrastructure is critical for ensuring WDFW's continued ability to "preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities." As an initial step toward building resilience to the impacts of climate change, 'Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW' will fund a contract to support the development of a vulnerability assessment for WDFW lands and supporting infrastructure. Understanding the impacts of climate change on WDFW lands and infrastructure is a necessary foundation for reducing climate risks, protecting the agency's investments, and

ensuring continued program success.

1 Office of Financial Management, Budget Division. 2020. Prioritizing Actions and Investments for Climate Resiliency in Washington. Report to the Legislature, Chapter 357, Laws of 2020.

2 This work is distinct and not duplicative of Department of Ecology's Freshwater Information Network.

3 Wilhere, G., Atha, J., Quinn, T., Tohver, I., Helbrecht, L. 2017. Incorporating climate change into culvert design in Washington State, USA. Ecological Engineering (104) 67-79. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoleng.2017.04.009>

4 Mauger, G.S., M. Liu, J.C. Adam, J. Won, G. Wilhere, D. Dulan, J. Atha, L. Helbrecht, and T. Quinn (2021). New Culvert Projections for Washington State: Improved Modeling, Probabilistic Projections, and an Updated Web Tool. Report prepared for the Northwest Climate Adaptation Science Center. Climate Impacts Group, University of Washington. <https://doi.org/10.6069/31T3-RE28>

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This is effectively a new program or initiative. Past work on this topic was funded through various funding mechanisms outlined below:

Species Conservation

Moving four staff scientist positions from contracts that have historically been funded by BPA, PUDs, DOE, and others to a more sustainable State funding source that will be required as WDFW seeks to increase knowledge about non-native species and their impact on our salmon populations.

Harvest and Recreation Opportunity

Work supported under this section is effectively a new program or initiative

Technical Assistance

Moving one Research Scientist position and one environmental position from project appointments to fulltime, permanent positions will: develop a core of trained, experienced personnel with climate adaptation experience across Washington; and provide staff to plan and carry out climate adaptation activities across WDFW.

The TerrAdapt contract will build out web portal that will enable WDFW staff access priorities for habitat restoration, connectivity, and barrier removal. This will build off back-end development that will be completed using 2022 supplemental budget funds.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and Benefits for 11.3 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions total \$1,147,000 in fiscal year 2024 and 12.3 FTE total \$1,239,000 in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing. Goods and Services (Object E) include \$6,000 per FTE per year for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year. Object E also includes the following: \$2,000 per year for boat operations (\$100 per day for 20 days); \$1,280 per year for sampling supplies; \$50,000 per year for lab analysis for Westside non-native predatory fish investigations; and \$18,000 per year for non-lethal stable isotope analysis to determine trophic relationships of native and non-species in the lower Snake River.

Onetime Professional Service Contracts (Object C) total \$769,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$407,000 in fiscal year 2025, for climate change vulnerability assessment development, developing a statewide connectivity strategy, downscaling climate data, habitat refugia modeling, developing a WDFW-specific application programming interface-based tool for prioritizing acquisition, restoration, and barrier removal activities.

Travel (Object G) totals \$64,000 in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing, for hotel and meals for staff who are doing field work, one truck to pull boat for six months for non-native predatory fish investigations, and for cold water refugia and thermalscape related travel for project staff. An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.5% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Alternative Funding Accounts

The Natural Climate Solutions Account was considered as an alternative to the General Fund-State to support this proposal. However, the General Fund-State is proposed as the funding source for three reasons. First, this package will fund 12.2 permanent FTEs, which are best matched with an ongoing source of funds. Second, delaying the work in this package until the second year of the biennium, when the Natural Climate Solutions Account funds become available, would decrease the usefulness of monitoring and climate assessments that are intended to feed into 2025-27 biennium budget development and push back time-sensitive climate resilience-building efforts. Third, there is uncertainty about funding priorities and processes for the Natural Climate Solutions Account.

Workforce Assumptions:

Species Conservation 4.0 FTE fiscal year 2024, 4.2 FTE fiscal year 2025 and ongoing)

Non-Native Predator Fish Monitoring (3.2 FTE)

1.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 2 to lead the field component of the Thermalscape and Westside Non-Native Fish Predator Investigations. They will develop weekly work plans following standardized protocols to deploy/retrieve temperature loggers and capture non-native predators using boat electro-shocking and hook and line. Also responsible for habitat surveys, electronic data collection and data QA/QC, database management, and maintenance of all gear.

0.5 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 2 to lead collection of samples for stable isotope analysis (4 times per year) for Eastside Non-Native Fish Predator Investigations.

0.5 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 4 to be the Project Manager for the Eastside Non-Native Predatory Fish Project. This position will serve as project manager, collect samples (4 times per year), analyze data, and write reports. Will have 1 reporting staff.

0.5 FTE Scientific Technician 2 (three scientific technicians for two months per year) will capture non-native predators using boat electro-shocking and hook and line. Staff will also be responsible for habitat surveys and for processing non-native fish stomachs for genetic (eDNA metabarcoding) and stable isotope analyses.

0.5 FTE Scientific Technician 3 (one staff for six months per year). Eastside non-native predatory fish collect samples in the field and process in lab.

0.2 FTE Research Scientist 2 (one staff for two months per year) will complete non-native predatory fish modeling and analysis.

Monitoring of Marine Mammals & Sea Life (1.0 FTE)

1.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Research Scientist 1 will support marine sea life monitoring, integration into fisheries planning, whale entanglement mitigation.

Harvest and Recreation (3.4 FTE fiscal year 2024, 4.0 FTE fiscal year 2025 and ongoing)

Climate Communications Capacity (1.0 FTE)

1.0 FTE Communications Consultant 4 - Executes outreach and communications planning for WDFW's climate change work, including staff training and developing partnerships with organizations needed to reach hunter, angler, and recreationalist audiences.

Monitoring Cold Water Refuges (3.0 FTE)

2.0 FTE Scientific Technician 2 (two seasonal creel samplers) to support with creel monitoring in cold water refuges to quantify WDFW's management outcomes.

1.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Research Scientist 2 - Biometrician to lead agency work developing proposals and sampling designs for cold water refuges.

Technical Assistance (3.9 FTE fiscal year 2024, 4.1 FTE fiscal year 2025 and ongoing)

Thermalscapes (2.0 FTE)

1.0 FTE Scientific Technician 2 (three staff for four months per year) will support the thermalscape project. Staff will be responsible for calibrating and building housings for temperature loggers, deploying loggers in river systems at intervals of 500 meters, and retrieving loggers and downloading data from the temperature monitoring array that currently is comprised of over 200 temperature monitoring locations across [water resource inventory areas](#) (WRIAs) 20-24 but will be expanding as the project develops.

1.0 FTE Biologist 4 – Biometrician to oversee sample design, deployment of temperature loggers in rivers and streams at approximately 500 meter intervals in monitored watersheds, QA/QC stream temperature data, manage stream temperature dataset in a comprehensive database, analyze stream temperature data, and generate current and future (2040s, 2080s) thermalscape maps using a spatial stream network temperature model by incorporating projected changes to air temperature and stream flow based on a moderate greenhouse gas scenario for Western Washington.

Climate Change Staff (2.0 FTEs)

1.0 FTE Environmental Planner 5 – Works with other state agencies to incorporate science-based management recommendations to guidance for increasing the climate resilience of fish and wildlife habitat in cities and counties throughout Washington. (This position had been supported in the current biennium by onetime funding provided to the Department of Commerce in budget item titled “Growth Management/Climate Guidance” from the 2021 operating budget (Chapter 334, Laws of 2021)

1.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Research Scientist 1 – Develop resources focusing on enhancing areas of vital habitat for safe passage, species migration, and climate resilience such as salmon recovery and ecosystem health services. (This position had been supported in the current biennium by onetime funding provided to the Department of Commerce in budget item titled “Growth Management/Climate Guidance” from the 2021 operating budget (Chapter 334, Laws of 2021)

Climate-Smart Culverts IT Support (0.1 FTE)

0.1 FTE Journey-IT App Development – IT support for climate-smart culvert tool. Following the rulemaking process this WDFW tool will see increases in network travel and use. On-going IT support is needed to ensure this tool is up and running smoothly.

**All staffing detail provided above is for fiscal year 2025 and ongoing. All staff costs are calculated as 2088 hours / 12 months = 174 hours per month.*

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This proposal supports Results Washington Goal 3: Sustainable Energy & a Clean Environment - Building a legacy of resource stewardship for the next generation of Washingtonians.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This proposal supports WDFW's 25-Year Strategic Plan Strategy 1: Proactively address conservation challenges. Specifically, this proposal will address near-term Action 7: develop and implement a WDFW Climate Resilience Plan; Action 2: Vastly expand current efforts to manage and recover at-risk fish and wildlife species; and Action 5: Ensure that land-use planning and decision are contributing to the conservation and recovery of fish and wildlife.

This proposal supports WDFW's 25-Year Strategic Plan Strategy 3: Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions. Specifically, this proposal will address near-term Action 2: Implement effect science communication training/strategies.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Preserve & Restore Aquatic Habitat & Species, 8.5 FTE and \$1,327,000 in fiscal year 2024 and 9.2 FTE and \$1,413,000 in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing. State General Fund.

Acquire and Manage Lands, \$745,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$391,000 in fiscal year 2025. State General Fund, onetime funding.

Preserve & Restore Terrestrial Habitat and Species, 2.1 FTE each year and \$652,000 fiscal year 2024 and \$523,000 fiscal year 2025. State General Fund.

Business Management and Obligations, 0.7 FTE and \$105,000 fiscal year 2024 and 1.0 FTE and \$150,000 fiscal year 2025 and ongoing. State General Fund.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department’s ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Aquatic invasive species in the state
- Acres of protected fish and wildlife habitat
- Threatened and endangered species population increases
- Percent change in hunter opportunities
- Technical assistance interactions

This 'Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW' proposal will ensure the following outcomes that are in-line with the above performance metrics.

Species Conservation

The Wildlife Climate Connectivity Strategy, funded as part of this proposal, will increase the number of acres of protected fish and wildlife habitat and will facilitate population increases in threatened and endangered species populations. The rapid pace of climate change poses challenges to many climate-sensitive species as they seek to adapt in-place or shift their ranges to track suitable conditions. Climate-driven range shifts are made more difficult by anthropogenic movement barriers like highways, cities, agricultural lands, and areas of intensive timber harvest. Investments in wildlife crossing structures may increasingly be required to facilitate range shifts and connect fragmented populations. This proposal will support the development of a Wildlife Climate Connectivity Strategy that will develop a plan for connectivity in Washington state by focusing on conserving areas that facilitate movement. This plan will identify and prioritize geographic areas in Washington to maintain and preserve the most important connectivity locations.

The Non-Native Predatory Fish Project, funded as part of this proposal, will facilitate the reduction of aquatic invasive species in the state. Invasive animals are a major cause of global biodiversity loss. In Washington, warming streams enable non-native warmwater fish species to inhabit streams and rivers that have historically been too cold. These warmwater species are competitors with and predators of native species, including salmon and steelhead. This decision package will increase monitoring capacity, to help WDFW better understand how native fish species are responding to on-going shifts in stream temperature, streamflow, and location shifts of non-native predatory fish. This monitoring is needed to identify trends in non-native fish species to inform management responses and areas where treatments are necessary.

Harvest and Recreation

The Climate Communications Capacity (1.0 FTE), funded as part of this proposal, will increase hunter opportunities across Washington. WDFW has a long history of providing hunting, and wildlife viewing opportunities to the public. A key goal of [WDFW’s 25-year Strategic Plan](#) is to better inform and engage the public and WDFW’s passionate constituencies in climate action through harvest, recreation, and stewardship. The ‘Building a Climate-Resilience WDFW’ decision package will support a communications consultant position who will develop and maintain an externally facing climate communications program to communicate how the Department will provide harvest and recreation opportunities to Washingtonians under a changing climate.

Technical Assistance

The contracts and FTEs supported under the “Technical Assistance” portfolio (Fig. 1) will increase technical assistance interactions. WDFW provides technical assistance, permitting, research, and planning support to a broad array of stakeholders across the state, with the goal of ensuring industry, infrastructure, recreation, agriculture, forestry, and other human activities are compatible with healthy fish and wildlife populations. New tools and improved data management funded through this Decision Package will enable managers and landowners to quantify and map locations of potential impacts to species, ecosystems, infrastructure and lands are needed to offer WDFW a spatially-explicit understanding of risks and opportunities and a means to prioritize areas for acquisition, restoration, or barrier removal.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

WDFW presented ‘Building a Climate Resilient WDFW’ to the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission’s (NWIFC) Commissioners and Finance Committee on Monday July 18th, 2022. This presentation provided an overview of the FTEs and contracts funded through the proposal and provided an opportunity for NWIFC Commissioners and Finance Committee to ask questions and provide recommended changes to the proposal. No suggested changes to the decision package were made by the NWIFC Commissioners.

Additionally, WDFW's Climate Coordinator is a member of the Northwest Climate Adaptation Science Center's (NW CASC) Advisory Committee, which includes representatives of state, federal and tribal resource management agencies in the Northwest. The Committee meets regularly to help identify science needs and priorities to ensure that NW CASC-funded science is ultimately useful, relevant, and of value to regional management of cultural and natural resources. Tribal Entities on the advisory committee include Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, Suquamish Tribe, and the Tulalip Tribes – ensuring science priorities reflect the natural resource science needs of Indigenous Communities. All four objectives outlined in 'Building a Climate Resilient WDFW' (species conservation, harvest and recreation, technical assistance, lands and infrastructure) are directly aligned with the six management priorities and associated key science opportunities in the NW CASC's Science Agenda. The work supported in this proposal will involve natural and social research to integrate community needs, priorities, values and opportunities for accelerating adaptation, and deep community engagement to enhance local adaptive capacity through application of this knowledge.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Constituents throughout the state will benefit from this proposal. It is expected that there are few, if any, communities that are excluded, marginalized, or disproportionately impacted by 'Building a Climate Resilient WDFW'. However, if this proposal does not receive funding, there could be disproportionate impacts to (1) Indigenous Communities and Tribes and (2) rural communities across Washington that would see immediate impacts from this proposal.

Target Populations or Communities:

Communities across Washington state are experiencing the impacts of climate change, yet these impacts do not affect all communities equally. Communities with higher exposure to projected changes in climate (e.g., extreme heat events, flood exposure) and lower adaptive capacity (the ability of human and natural systems to prepare for, adjust to, respond to, and recover from experienced or anticipated climate impacts) disproportionately bear the burden of these impacts. The 4th National Climate Assessment¹ stated that "frontline communities² in the Northwest include [1] tribes and Indigenous peoples, [2] those most dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods, and [3] the economically disadvantaged." 'Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW' will increase the climate resilience of fish, wildlife, and habitats that play central roles to frontline communities including (1) tribes and Indigenous peoples, and (2) rural communities reliant on natural resource economies.

Indigenous Communities and Tribes. Climate change is threatening the traditional practices of tribes and Indigenous peoples across the Northwest. As the climate continues to warm, fish, wildlife, and ecosystems will experience worsening impacts, with consequences for ways of life for Indigenous communities. Climate change will lead to continued declines in habitat quality, shifts in the timing of berry ripening and plant blooming, and altered availability and distribution of "first foods" - foods important for Indigenous physical, mental, and spiritual health - including roots, berries, deer, elk, and salmon.

'Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW' will support the generation and application of climate science information that is needed to adapt to the on-going and projected impacts of climate change and make informed decisions that build resilience of natural resources throughout the state that Indigenous communities rely upon for cultural, subsistence, or socioeconomic purposes.

Rural Communities. Many of Washington's rural communities are heavily dependent on natural resource economies and are therefore vulnerable to climate impacts such as wildfire, increasing flood risk, declining summer water availability, and disease spread. Across the Northwest, rural communities are a top producer of timber products. In 2015, the agriculture, forest, and fisheries industries accounted for 700,000 jobs and resulted in \$139 billion in sales.² The ability of rural communities to build resilience to the impacts of climate change is frequently limited due to geographic isolation from academic research institutions and disproportionately lower political representation in state government (e.g., Fothergill and Peek 2004).

'Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW' will increase the climate resilience of fish, wildlife, and habitats that are central to the natural resource economies rural communities are reliant upon.

1 May C., C. Luce, J. Casola, M. Chang, J. Cuhaciyan, M. Dalton, S. Lowe, G. Morishima, P. Mote, A. Petersen, G. Roesch-McNally, and E. York, 2018: Northwest. In *Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States: Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II* [Reidmiller, D.R., C.W. Avery, D.R. Easterling, K.E. Kunkel, K.L.M. Lewis, T.K. Maycock, and B.C. Stewart (eds.)]. U.S. Global Change Research Program, Washington, DC, USA, pp. 1036–1100. doi: 10.7930/NCA4.2018.CH24

2 People who are already vulnerable, including lower-income and other marginalized communities, have lower capacity to prepare for and cope with extreme weather and climate-related events and are expected to experience greater impacts (May et al. 2018).

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6: fish passage barriers and is directly aligned with Action (#152) Inventory and assess all fish passage barriers (culverts, dams, etc.). Prioritize, sequence, and implement fish passage barrier correction or removal in watersheds by implementing key opportunities 1) Support Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) compilation and development of statewide strategies, in collaboration with tribal nations, other agencies, and local partners, including prioritization and sequencing of barriers, and 2) Include stormwater and climate change priorities in transportation plans, by improving WDFW's Climate Smart Culvert tool that will be used by engineers and resource managers to assess how culvert design should be modified to account for projected climate change.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 14: Invasive species and is directly aligned Action (ID# 203), Create an integrated planning approach to protect and enhance biodiversity in the Puget Sound ecosystem by mitigating the threat of invasive species by implementing key opportunity, collaborate on monitoring and mitigation across state and local agencies and tribal co-managers by increasing WDFW's capacity to monitor trends in non-native predatory fish in critical stream habitat.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery by increasing WDFW's capacity to monitor non-native predatory fish relevant to salmon habitat. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Strategy 15 Action #204 Reduce displacement, competition, and predation of imperiled native species caused by native or invasive species by increasing WDFW's capacity to monitor trends in non-native predatory fish in critical stream habitat that will inform adaptive management.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 18: Awareness of Effects of Climate Change and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 131) Expand monitoring, research, and assessment of the individual and cumulative impacts and risks of climate change on Puget Sound by assessing and building institutional awareness of the vulnerability of WDFW lands and supporting infrastructure to climate change impacts.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 20: Climate Adaptation and Resilience by increasing WDFW ability to better protect and restore ecosystems and benefit human well-being by meeting species conservation and recovery goals by providing harvest and recreation opportunities under a changing climate, providing effective technical assistance, permitting, research, and planning that account for projected changes in climate, and increasing the resilience of WDFW's lands and infrastructure to the observed and projected impacts of climate change. This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID# 137) Implement multi-benefit projects and programs that synergistically advance Puget Sound recovery goals and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase carbon sequestration in Puget Sound ecosystems, increase climate adaptation, and promote climate resilience by implementing key opportunity, identify and address climate change risks to ensure resilience and reliability of infrastructure necessary for transportation (including roads, culverts, and bridges), communication, wastewater treatment, stormwater management, and power, by improving WDFW's Climate Smart Culvert tool that will be used by engineers and resource managers to assess how culvert design related to fish passage barriers should be modified to account for projected climate change.

This decision package is directly aligned Action (ID #148) Develop and enhance guidance on best practices to reduce emissions and risks and adapt to the most impactful climate stressors by implementing key opportunity, update local, regional, state, and tribal nations' guidance and planning documents to require the integration of adequate and timely responses to changing climate and ocean conditions by increasing WDFW staff capacity to ensure that guidance provided to local jurisdictions, pursuant to their Growth Management Act Comprehensive Plan updates, Critical Area Ordinances, Shoreline Management Act applications, and other efforts accounts for the impacts of climate change on fish, wildlife, and habitat affected. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 148) Increase availability of data, tools, and training, and increase the technical capacity of partners in the recovery community, to reduce the magnitude of and vulnerability to climate change, and advance adaptation of the Puget Sound socio-ecological system by integrating dynamic spatial models like TerrAdapt into adaptive management plans, enabling WDFW managers to better prioritize where conservation actions are implemented to maintain ecologically connected networks of habitat that support a thriving and resilient network of ecosystems across Washington.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C: Research and Monitoring by increasing recovery research and monitoring related to future climate conditions of critical ecosystems, fisheries, and non-native predatory fish. This package is directly aligned Action (ID #188) Develop and analyze alternative future scenarios to help leaders make decisions that will lead to system-level change under a range of projections for climate change, population growth, and other uncertainties. by implementing key opportunity Institute future scenarios

approaches as a mindset facilitated through tool kits designed to enable practitioners in the recovery system to consider the many ways the future may unfold and how strategies can be made more robust, responsive, and effective by improving WDFW's Climate Smart Culvert tool that will be used by engineers and resource managers to assess how culvert design related to fish passage barriers should be modified to account for projected climate change.

This decision package implements the Priority Action 3 Assess the degree, and how, access to marine and coastal resources (e.g., fisheries, open space, native foods) is changing among different communities in the Salish Sea from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by supporting implementation of an entanglement risk and bycatch monitoring program to support cross program marine wildlife recovery efforts and marine fisheries planning under changing climate. This decision packages also fulfills the Secondary criteria - Adds value by filling gaps from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by addressing the gap of ecological trends in non-native predatory fish in response to climate change.

This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy 3 Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to their historical habitat, by improving WDFW's Climate Smart Culvert tool that will be used by engineers and resource managers to assess how culvert design related to fish passage barriers should be modified to account for projected climate change. This decision package also indirectly implements Salmon strategy 6 Address predatory and food web issues for salmon, by supporting monitoring efforts of non-native predatory fish to develop ecological information that would support predatory fish management.

This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca task force recommendation 14: reduce populations of nonnative predatory fish species that prey upon or compete with Chinook by supporting monitoring efforts of non-native predatory fish to develop ecological information that would support management. This decision package also indirectly implements Orca task force recommendation 45: Mitigate the impact of a changing climate by accelerating and increasing action to increase the resiliency and vitality of salmon populations and the ecosystems on which they depend by increasing WDFW's capacity to support climate resiliency projects, programs, research, monitoring and technical assistance that could support ecosystems that salmon rely on.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

Washington State Department of Transportation, Washington State Department of Ecology, Washington State Parks, Washington Department of Natural Resources, Washington State Department of Commerce, Puget Sound Partnership, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, tribal governments, University of Washington Climate Impacts Group, University of Washington Northwest Climate Adaptation Science Center, University of Washington Northwest Climate Resilience Collaborative are all likely to support this proposal.

Stakeholder Response:

Conservation Northwest, Long Live the Kings, Cascadia Partner Forum are likely to support this proposal.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

This proposal is not in response to any litigation, audit finding, executive order, or task force recommendation.

Reference Documents

[BC IT Addendum.docx](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

Yes

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$825	\$890	\$1,715	\$890	\$890	\$1,780
Obj. B	\$322	\$349	\$671	\$349	\$349	\$698
Obj. C	\$769	\$407	\$1,176	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. E	\$139	\$145	\$284	\$145	\$145	\$290
Obj. G	\$64	\$64	\$128	\$64	\$64	\$128
Obj. T	\$710	\$622	\$1,332	\$485	\$485	\$970

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Agency Recommendation Summary

Climate change is negatively impacting fish, wildlife, and communities, and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (WDFW) operations contribute to climate change. Current law (Revised Code of Washington 70A.45.050) requires state agencies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. In response, the “Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Sustainability Plan” was developed. This package funds the first biennium of Sustainability Plan implementation by catalyzing transition of the Department’s vehicle fleet to electricity and alternative fuels, advancing energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, creating a Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) program, and supporting foundational research and capacity-building. This package is projected to reduce the agency’s emissions 29.5% by 2025, putting WDFW on track to comply with the next required tier of reducing emissions 45% by 2030. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	3.0	2.0	2.5	2.0	2.0	2.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$943	\$809	\$1,752	\$408	\$408	\$816
Total Expenditures	\$943	\$809	\$1,752	\$408	\$408	\$816

Decision Package Description

WDFW’s operations contribute to climate change

The impacts of climate change on Washington’s fish, wildlife, ecosystems, and communities are already being felt. Climate change poses challenges to WDFW’s ability to fulfill the agency’s mission (see the 2023-25 biennium “Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW” decision package). At the same time, the Department’s operations contribute to climate change. WDFW is developing a holistic response to climate change that falls into two related but distinct categories: 1) reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and 2) building resilience to the unavoidable impacts of climate change. WDFW is putting forth a decision package for each of these two categories. This package, “Building a Carbon-Neutral WDFW”, addresses the root cause of climate change by reducing the agency’s GHG emissions. “Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW” focuses on preparing WDFW for the inevitable impacts of climate change. These two packages are coordinated, additive, and support very different activities and outcomes. Both packages need to be funded for WDFW to pursue the urgent actions necessary to both reduce and prepare for climate change.

WDFW’s operations produce GHG emissions that contribute to climate change. Burning fossil fuels to power agency vehicles or generate electricity for agency facilities releases greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide that trap heat in the atmosphere, causing climate change. In this way, WDFW’s current operations contribute to harming the very environment the agency is charged with protecting.

In 2021, the operation of WDFW’s fleet and facilities emitted 12,838 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO2E), as reported to Department of Ecology. 54% of emissions came from fuel used in vehicles, equipment, and boats, and the remaining 46% came from electricity and natural gas used in agency facilities. In addition to mandatory emissions reporting, WDFW also voluntarily developed GHG emissions estimates for additional agency activities, such as hatchery fish, employee commuting, and business travel.

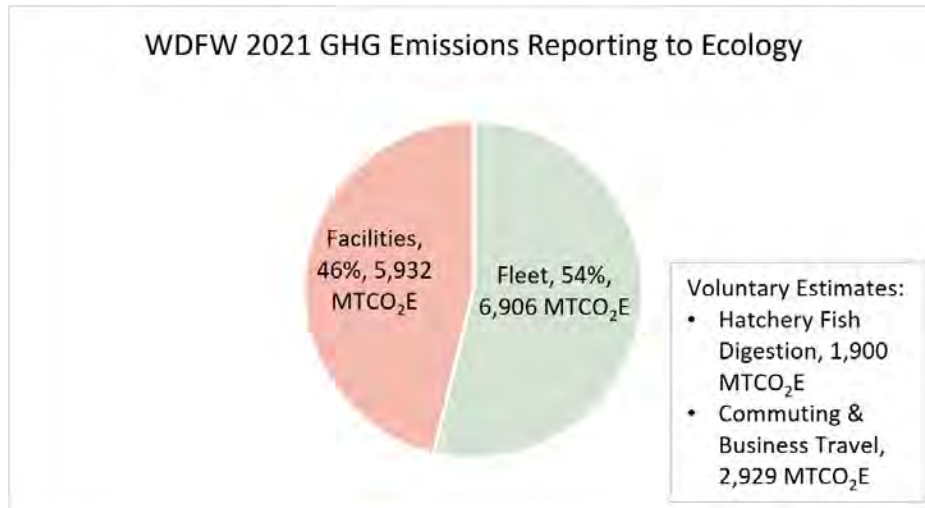


Figure 1. In 2021, WDFW’s fleet and facilities emitted 12,838 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO₂E). WDFW also developed voluntary GHG emissions estimates for hatchery fish digestion and commuting and business travel.

WDFW is required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from agency operations

Washington State has mandated, through legislative action ([RCW 70A.45.050](#)), that state agencies reduce GHG emissions 15% by 2020, 45% by 2030, 70% by 2040, and 95% by 2050, relative to the recorded 2005 baseline levels. In 2020, the law was updated through [Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 2311](#) to require state agencies to develop short-term actions and long-term strategies to meet these emissions limits. In addition, WDFW’s 25-Year Strategic Plan commits to reducing agency GHG emissions 90% by 2045 and developing and implementing a Sustainability Plan.

Washington’s climate commitments are in line with the global scientific consensus that significant emissions reductions are needed by 2030 to avoid catastrophic levels of warming. The need to reduce GHG emissions is urgent and time sensitive. Continued use of fossil fuels in agency vehicles and facilities will contribute to worsening climate change impacts, additional pollution in marginalized communities, and escalating financial costs to the state as emissions become more heavily regulated. The sooner the transition away from fossil fuels is made, the larger the climate benefits and cost savings that can be realized.

While WDFW’s emissions may seem small compared to the global problem of climate change, the agency takes responsibility for operating in a manner that is as environmentally efficient and as sustainable as possible. By taking action and sharing lessons learned, WDFW can advance efforts to address climate change and increase environmentally sustainable operations among our partners and the public.

WDFW’s Sustainability Plan lays out strategies to reduce emissions and costs

In 2022, WDFW developed a Sustainability Plan that lays out 29 strategies and 90 implementation actions to reduce the Department’s GHG emissions. The Sustainability Plan identifies a pathway to achieve the 2030 emissions limit and come close to achieving the 2040 emissions limit. Advances in technology for low-emissions trucks will be needed in order for the Department to achieve the 2050 emissions limit. The Sustainability Plan both satisfies the RCW 70A.45.050 requirement to develop strategies to meet state emissions limits and voluntarily addresses additional Department activities that produce emissions and other environmental impacts.

Analysis of the Sustainability Plan found that in many cases implementing the GHG reduction strategies will result in long-term savings. This is because money saved on operating expenses such as fuel and energy outweighs the capital and labor costs needed for fleet electrification, energy efficiency upgrades, transition to renewable energy, etc. Overall, implementation of the Sustainability Plan is estimated to result in a total net savings of \$5 to \$7.1 million through 2050.

Package would put WDFW on track to meet the next RCW limit of reducing emissions 45% by 2030

This package will reduce harmful GHG emissions by funding the first biennium of implementation actions from WDFW’s Sustainability Plan. Along with complementary projects proposed in the capital budget, this package is projected to reduce WDFW’s GHG emissions 5.1% by 2025, preventing 901 tons of GHG emissions annually. Mandates in the Clean Energy Transformation Act affecting the state’s utilities are projected to reduce WDFW’s GHG emissions by an additional 24.4% by 2025. Together, these changes would reduce WDFW’s GHG emissions 29.5% by 2025, putting the agency on track to meet the next RCW 70A.45.050 limit of reducing emissions 45% by 2030.

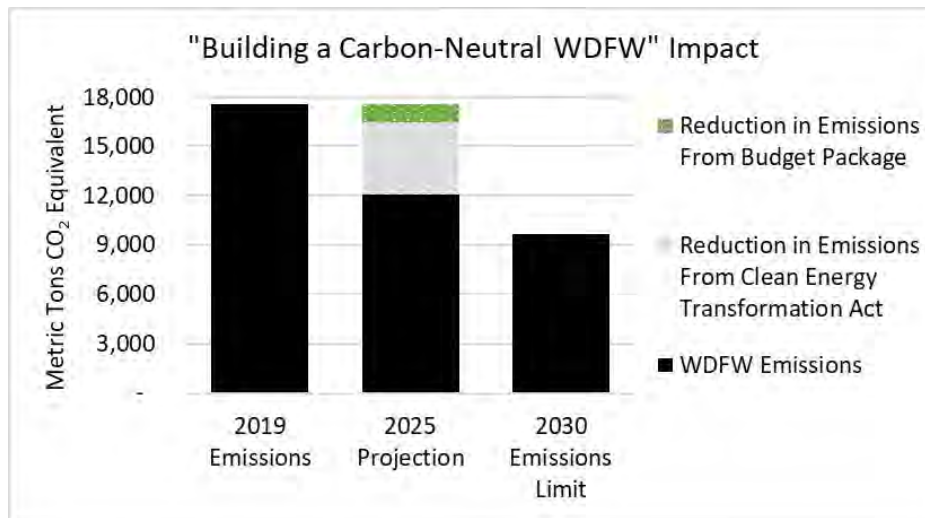


Figure 2. This budget package, along with the Clean Energy Transformation Act, would reduce WDFW's GHG emissions 29.5% by 2025, putting the agency on track to meet the next RCW 70A.45.050 limit of reducing emissions 45% by 2030.

This package is organized into three aspects of WDFW operations: low-emissions vehicle fleet, renewable and energy-efficient facilities, and climate-friendly operations.

1. Low-Emissions Vehicle Fleet

WDFW's fleet of 1,500 vehicles, 800 boats, and hundreds of pieces of equipment is the agency's largest source of emissions, producing 6,906 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2021. This package reduces fleet emissions by catalyzing the transition to electricity and alternative fuels for vehicles, boats, and equipment. This package would fund a contract to research and plan for the transition to a low-emissions fleet by addressing current and upcoming technologies that could meet operational demands such as electric trucks, renewable diesel, and hybrid boat motors; infrastructure needs; costs; maintenance; and policy questions such as impacts on employee workflows. The agency does not have this expertise in-house and needs expert guidance to identify low-emissions alternatives that meet WDFW's rugged operational demands. This contract is complemented by a capital budget request to install electric vehicle chargers. Together, these items are projected to reduce fleet emissions 7% by 2025 by enabling WDFW to convert 45% of vehicles to electric over the next 11 years, including 8% of vehicles during the 2023-25 biennium.

2. Renewable and Energy-Efficient Facilities

WDFW's 850 facilities, comprising nearly two million square feet, are the agency's second largest source of emissions, producing 5,932 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2021. This package reduces facilities emissions by catalyzing the transition to habitat-friendly renewable energy systems and increasing energy efficiency. This package would fund two contracts to assess the feasibility and optimal siting of solar and micro-hydropower energy systems at WDFW facilities. The agency does not have this expertise in-house and requires expert guidance to develop capital project proposals to transition WDFW facilities to renewable energy. In addition, this package would fund 1.5 full time employees (FTEs) to lead renewable energy and energy efficiency projects, improve facilities energy data, and proactively track and manage energy use. These items are complemented by a capital budget request to implement energy efficiency improvements at WDFW facilities. Together, these items are projected to reduce facilities emissions 1% by 2025. This is on top of substantial reductions expected due to Clean Energy Transformation Act mandates.

3. Climate-Friendly Operations

WDFW's Sustainability Plan also developed emissions estimates and reduction strategies for additional agency activities that are not mandated under RCW 70A.45.050. First, hatchery fish produce nitrous oxide emissions as part of their natural digestive process. These emissions were estimated at approximately 1,900 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2019. This package includes contract funds to research options to measure and reduce nitrous oxide emissions from hatchery fish. In addition, employee commuting and business travel is a significant source of emissions, estimated at 2,929 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2019. This package supports 0.5 FTE and incentive funds to create and administer a Commute Trip Reduction program that encourages commuting via bike, walking, transit, vanpool, and carpool, in line with similar programs at other state agencies. These items are projected to reduce employee commuting emissions 10% by 2025. Finally, this

package includes 0.5 FTE to support Sustainability Plan implementation and GHG emissions data collection, analysis, and tracking, along with contract funds to develop staff climate change training to build internal capacity to reduce emissions and increase climate resilience.

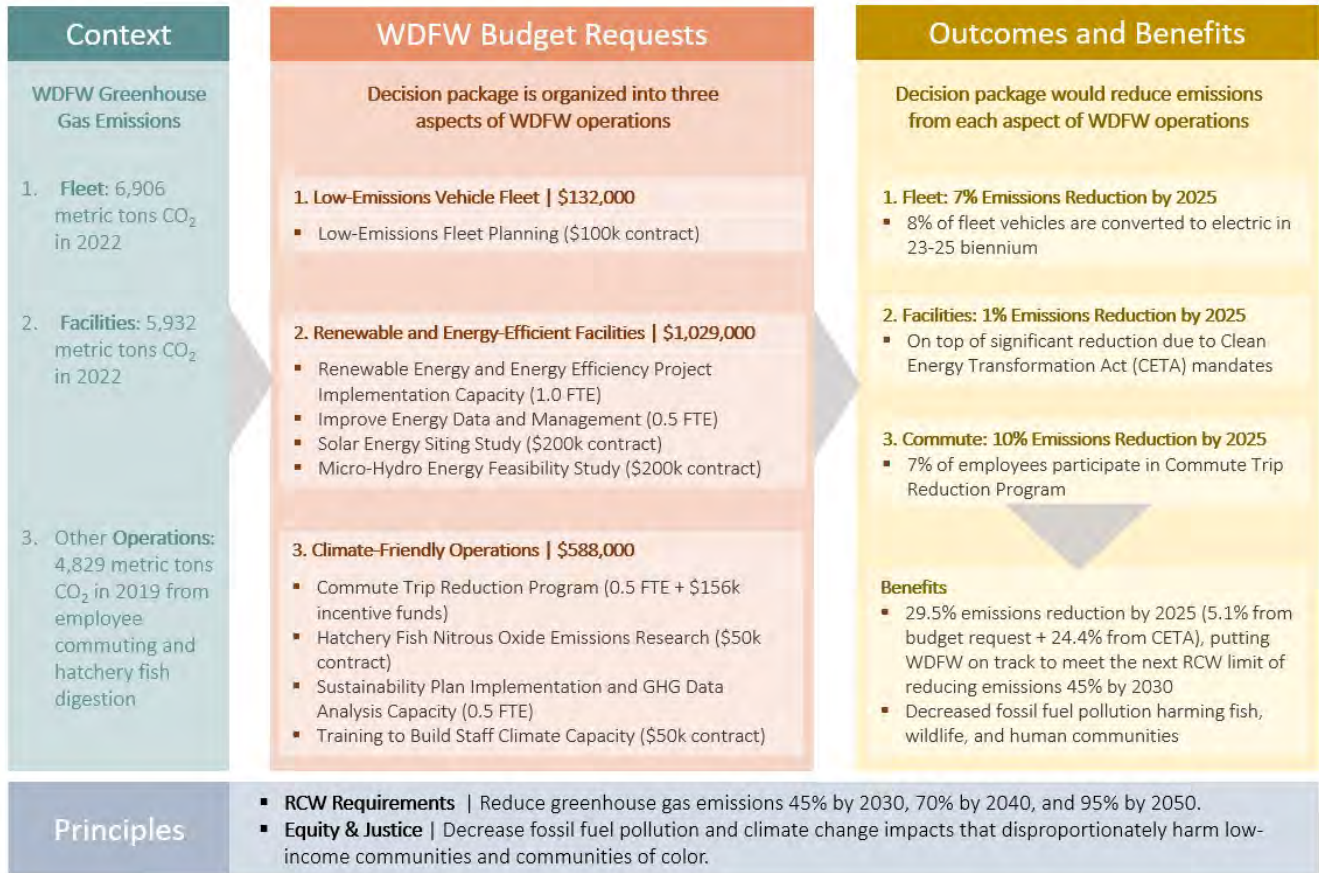


Figure 3. The “Building a Carbon-Neutral WDFW” proposal for reducing Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s greenhouse gas emissions and complying with RCW 70A.45.050 emissions limits.

Resources are needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and comply with RCW

Because of a lack of investment and intentional action by the agency, WDFW fell short of achieving the first RCW 70A.45.050 limit of reducing emissions 15% by 2020. In 2021, WDFW utilized funding from a budget proviso associated with ESSHB 2311 to hire an Environmental Sustainability Coordinator and contract with a consultant to analyze the agency’s GHG emissions, develop strategies to reduce emissions, and create a Sustainability Plan that provides a roadmap to comply with the RCW emissions limits. However, additional resources are needed to implement strategies to transition the fleet to electric vehicles and alternative fuels, transition facilities to renewable and efficient energy, and address agency-specific emissions sources like hatchery fish and employee commuting. If this package is not funded and status quo operations continue, WDFW will not be able to implement the Sustainability Plan and will continue to fall short of the RCW emissions limits and contribute to worsening climate change impacts.

An alternative to the General Fund-State funding source that was considered is the new Climate Commitment Account. However, the General Fund-State is proposed as the funding source for three reasons. First, this package would fund 2.0 FTEs and Commute Trip Reduction incentives on an ongoing basis, which are best matched with an ongoing source of funds. Second, delaying the work in this package until the second year of the biennium, when Climate Commitment Account funds become available, would decrease the usefulness of planning studies for a low-emissions vehicle fleet and solar and micro-hydropower energy systems that are intended to feed into BN25-27 capital budget development and push back time-sensitive emissions reductions. Third, there is uncertainty about funding priorities and processes for the Climate Commitment Account.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This is effectively a new program or initiative. Past work on GHG reduction was funded through a budget proviso associated with ESSHB 2311. The proviso funding amounts were \$112,000 in BN19-21, \$485,000 in BN21-23, and \$386,000 in BN23-25 for 0.4-1.0 FTE Environmental Planner 4 and 0.2-0.3 FTE Facilities Senior Planner, along with \$50,000 in contract funds. These resources supported initial assessments and planning for WDFW to reduce GHG emissions and increase carbon sequestration.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, in fiscal year (FY) 2024 for 3.0 FTE positions totals \$388,000. Salaries and benefits in FY 2025 and ongoing for 2.0 FTE positions totals \$294,000. Object B includes \$78,000 per year for sustainable commuting incentives such as a vanpool stipends and financial incentives for employee commutes made via bike, walk, carpool, and transit. Financial incentive amounts are based on an employee commute survey and research on other state agency programs and assume 7% of employees participate.

Professional service contracts, object C, totals \$300,000 in FY 2024 and \$300,000 in FY 2025 to research and plan transitioning the fleet to electricity and alternative fuels, research and plan transitioning facilities to solar or micro-hydropower energy systems, research options to measure and reduce nitrous oxide emissions from hatchery fish and develop staff climate change training to build internal capacity. Contract amounts are based on market research.

Goods and services, object E, includes \$6,000 per FTE per year for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year. An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Alternative Funding Accounts

An alternative to the General Fund-State funding source that was considered is the new Climate Commitment Account. However, the General Fund-State is proposed as the funding source for three reasons. First, this package would fund 2.0 FTEs and Commute Trip Reduction incentives on an ongoing basis, which are best matched with an ongoing source of funds. Second, delaying the work in this package until the second year of the biennium, when Climate Commitment Account funds become available, would decrease the usefulness of planning studies for a low-emissions vehicle fleet and solar and micro-hydropower energy systems that are intended to feed into BN25-27 capital budget development and push back time-sensitive emissions reductions. Third, there is uncertainty about funding priorities and processes for the Climate Commitment Account.

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classification and the associated work are as follows:

Renewable and Energy-Efficient Facilities

1 FTE Facilities Senior Planner to lead facilities energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in coordination with the Environmental Sustainability Coordinator.

1 FTE Fiscal Analyst 3 to improve facilities energy data and implement recommendations of Washington State University Energy Program report, enabling automated proactive tracking and management of energy use. This is a 1-year project term in FY 2024, onetime funding requested.

Climate-Friendly Operations

0.5 FTE Human Resource Consultant 3 to create and administer a Commute Trip Reduction Program that provides resources and financial incentives for commuting via bike, walking, transit, vanpool, and carpool.

0.5 FTE Administrative Intern 3 to support Sustainability Plan implementation and GHG emissions data collection, analysis, and tracking.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This package aligns with the Results Washington "Sustainable Energy and Clean Environment" goal to combat climate change and directly responds to the ESSHB 2311 mandate for state agencies to reduce GHG emissions. This package, along with complementary projects proposed in the capital budget, will enable WDFW to reduce emissions 29.5% by 2025.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This package is central to the following elements of WDFW's Strategic Plan:

Model operational and environmental excellence near-term action 8: "Develop and implement a WDFW sustainability plan."

Model operational and environmental excellence longer-term action 1: "Continued implementation of an environmental sustainability plan."

Model operational and environmental excellence 25-year desired outcome: "Department operations set the example for environmental sustainability among state agencies with a reduced carbon footprint."

25-year performance goal: "90 percent reduction in WDFW's carbon footprint."

WDFW Activity Inventory

Business Management and Obligations, \$775,000 and 3.0 FTE in FY 2023; \$641,000 and 2.0 FTE in FY 2024; and \$408,000 and 2.0 FTE in FY 2025 and ongoing

This package supports the activity inventory item "Business Management and Obligations" and applicable support strategies:

- Build and maintain office facilities
- Manage human resources
- Provide agency leadership and strategy

WDFW relies on administrative infrastructure like facilities, vehicles, managing human resources, and communicating with staff and the public to support staff who work directly in service of the mission. This package would contribute to facility maintenance by improving energy efficiency and planning for the installation of solar energy systems. These items have the potential to decrease both greenhouse gas emissions and operating costs. This package would contribute to managing human resources by creating a Commute Trip Reduction program that will reduce emissions while increasing employee retention and wellness. This package would contribute to agency leadership and strategy by supporting staff climate change training and the tracking and reporting of Sustainability Plan implementation.

Produce Hatchery Fish, \$168,000 and 0 FTE in FY 2023; \$168,000 and 0 FTE in FY 2024

This package supports the activity inventory item "Produce hatchery fish" and applicable support strategy:

- Build and maintain hatcheries

WDFW's 81 hatcheries produce healthy fish to benefit the citizens of Washington while providing conservation to natural origin salmonids. The production of hatchery fish requires facility maintenance. This package would contribute to hatchery maintenance by assessing the feasibility of installing micro-hydropower energy systems that could reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase electricity. This package would also reduce the carbon footprint of hatchery fish production by researching nitrous oxide emissions from fish digestion.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Percentage of assets maintained to OFM standards
- Percentage of assets maintained to an adequate operational standard

Along with complementary projects proposed in the capital budget, this package is projected to reduce WDFW's GHG emissions 5.1% by 2025. The Clean Energy Transformation Act mandates affecting the state's utilities are projected to reduce WDFW's GHG emissions by an additional 24.4% by 2025. Together, these changes would reduce WDFW's GHG emissions 29.5% by 2025, putting the agency on track to meet the next RCW 70A.45.050 limit of reducing emissions 45% by 2030.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

During development of WDFW's Sustainability Plan, the agency's coordinators for climate change and environmental sustainability conducted a public presentation to the Big Tent Committee of the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission. WDFW is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. This proposal is the result of a need to reduce GHG emissions and transition to renewable energy sources, increasing WDFW's sustainability and preparedness for the unavoidable impacts of climate change.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Rural WDFW employees bear higher burdens of travel expense due to greater distances between major cities and limited intercity public transportation. These employees will be less able to participate in incentive programs that rely on public transit infrastructure or slower, strenuous forms of transportation such as walking or bicycling. For rural employees, the most impactful programs this budget request proposes are the transition to electric vehicles and the required infrastructure to support them.

Target Populations or Communities:

Communities across Washington state are experiencing the impacts of climate change, yet these impacts do not affect all communities equally. Low-income communities and communities of color experience disproportionate climate change impacts like excessive heat. These communities also have higher rates of air pollution and health impacts caused by fossil fuels used in vehicles and energy generation. In addition, rural communities face increased wildfire and flooding risks due to climate change. By reducing GHG emissions, this package contributes to limiting the impacts of climate change and air pollution in low-income communities, communities of color, and rural communities.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 19, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, by decreasing the vulnerability of Puget Sound to climate change by decreasing the magnitude of climate change through large scale institutional reductions in greenhouse gases for WDFW that also advance Puget Sound statutory goals for greenhouse gas reduction. This decision package is also directly aligned with several actions in Strategy 19. This decision package supports Action (ID 136): Develop and implement plans, regulations, and incentives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from all sources, especially primary emitting sources (those that account for more than 16 percent of emissions) including land use and transportation; electricity; residential, commercial, and industrial building; and heating by implementing key opportunity; fully implement the Clean Fuel Standards Act, Clean Energy Transformation Act, and Climate Commitment Act; maintain continued engagement and accountability practices to ensure policies have long term impact by implementing programs that will allow WDFW to meet its statutory requirements related to the Clean Energy Transformation Act by putting WDFW on track to meet the next RCW 70A.45.050 limit of reducing emissions 45% by 2030.

This decision package also supports Action (ID 136) Develop and implement plans, regulations, and incentives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from all sources, especially primary emitting sources (those that account for more than 16 percent of emissions) including land use and transportation; electricity; residential, commercial, and industrial building; and heating by implementing key opportunity; support the electrification of public fleets, including Washington State Ferries; increase use of renewables, decrease use of fossil fuels, and promote the creation of circular economies by supporting research and planning for WDFW's transition to a low-emissions fleet by addressing current and upcoming technologies that could meet operational demands such as electric trucks, renewable diesel, and hybrid boat motors; infrastructure needs; costs; maintenance; and policy questions such as impacts on employee workflows.

This decision package also supports Action (ID 141), increase and ensure institutional infrastructure and funding for research and monitoring to explore, track, and evaluate the efficacy and feasibility of carbon sequestration and emissions reduction by implementing key opportunity research, fund, and utilize low carbon technologies, including battery technology, energy storage, and distribution, as well as carbon sequestration in forests, soils, and as blue carbon, by supporting WDFW's capacity for GHG emissions data collection, analysis, and tracking that would support future carbon reduction strategies.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery by implementing key opportunity to assess the readiness of Puget Sound hatcheries to provide and adapt their services in the face of climate change by researching options for WDFW to measure and reduce nitrous oxide emissions from hatchery fish.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria: Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by ensuring capacity to track greenhouse gas emissions data by WDFW programs and operations. Additionally, this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 43, take aggressive, comprehensive and sustained action to reduce human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, with the goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2050 and Salmon Strategy recommendation 4 by implementing greenhouse gas reduction programs that will allow WDFW to meet its statutory requirements.

State Workforce Impacts:

This package creates a new employee benefit that provides modest financial incentives for Commute Trip Reduction.

Intergovernmental:

Many other state agencies are likely to support this proposal as agencies collaborate to reduce GHG emissions. WDFW is a leader in this area and proactively shares resources and lessons learned with other state agencies both informally and through venues like the Department of Commerce State Efficiency and Environmental Performance Office.

Stakeholder Response:

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on climate change are likely to support this proposal.

State Facilities Impacts:

This package will not require additional workspace. It supports increased energy efficiency, increased renewable energy, decreased energy use, and decreased energy costs at WDFW facilities through 1.5 FTEs and contract funds. WDFW anticipates submitting future capital budget requests for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects based on the results of the feasibility and siting studies in this package. Capital projects of this nature are projected to result in long-term cost savings.

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

This proposal is in response to RCW 70A.45.050 / ESSHB 2311, which requires state agencies to reduce GHG emissions.

Reference Documents

[WDFW Sustainability Plan compressed.pdf](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$224	\$157	\$381	\$157	\$157	\$314
Obj. B	\$164	\$137	\$301	\$137	\$137	\$274
Obj. C	\$300	\$300	\$600	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. E	\$18	\$12	\$30	\$12	\$12	\$24
Obj. T	\$237	\$203	\$440	\$102	\$102	\$204

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

Investments in body worn camera (BWC) technologies support contemporary policies in law enforcement transparency and reduce officer safety liabilities. These devices are essential tools that support public expectations regarding police interactions and accountability. By providing audio and video footage BWCs affirm or refute claims of wrongdoing, resolving the potential for frivolous lawsuits and needless investments in internal investigations that detract from the primary mission of public service. As fully commissioned police officers, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Enforcement officers need to be equipped with BWCs to advance public safety. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$817	\$772	\$1,589	\$772	\$772	\$1,544
Total Expenditures	\$817	\$772	\$1,589	\$772	\$772	\$1,544

Decision Package Description

Law enforcement agencies nationwide are implementing body-worn cameras for the purposes of improving officer safety, enhancing the quality of evidence, reducing civilian complaints, increasing transparency, and reducing liability. Studies are showing that some departments across the globe who implement BWCs are seeing reductions in citizen injuries and complaints. Roughly 93% of the public favor BWC use by police officers according to a Pew Research Center survey, and a recent State of the Industry Survey identified that 82% of officers surveyed want to wear them on the job. The procurement of BWCs is strongly supported by legislative constituencies, police reform initiatives, and the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs.

BWCs are cameras with a microphone and internal data storage whose popularity has risen due to high profile events where discrepancies in eyewitness accounts have prompted calls for police officers to be outfitted with BWCs. They allow audio and video footage to be stored and analyzed with compatible software. Cameras are typically designed to be located on an officer's chest or head. There are considerations for integrating BWC into current systems, such as data storage, policies for BWC use, and legal implications of using the devices. BWCs provide agency leadership with recorded evidence of the significance of contingency operations, including natural and man-made disasters that officers respond to and support.

The Department has not submitted this request previously and recognizes this biennium is an ideal time to initiate fielding and employment of this capability for multiple reasons. The advantages of employing BWCs outweigh the disadvantages., BWCs are now more durable, easier to dock and download video, and mounts are improved. The costs associated with implementing BWCs have consistently decreased as technology advances. WDFW has researched federal grant opportunities available to law enforcement agencies, however they are predominantly exclusive to municipal, county, and tribal jurisdictions but not to state programs.

The records created by the BWC technologies will be a tremendous evidentiary resource should a WDFW officer encounter an adverse situation. This request includes funding for the initial purchase of the hardware and supporting software applications as well as sustainable funding to ensure continued use in the future. It includes full time positions to support records and IT personnel who would help integrate records into the departments new records management system for ease of use and distribution. Finally, this package accommodates public records requests and redaction of the associated records derived from the BWC employment.

One alternative explored is to do nothing (status quo). Continued employment of WDFW Police Officers without the added benefit of BWCs exposes the officers and the state to elevated risk and liability. The Enforcement program will encounter increasing levels of difficulty and scrutiny with public interactions and the requirements to provide evidence of conduct and accountability. The requirement to record known felons as well as detainment of juveniles contained in recently passed police reform legislation coupled with the fact that Officers work remotely make employing BWCs essential for the Program.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

N/A

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, for three full-time equivalent (FTE) positions totals \$434,000 ongoing. Professional Service Contract, object C, totals \$120,000 ongoing for body-worn camera and evidence management software services. Goods and services, object E, includes \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year. Equipment, object J, includes \$34,000 in FY24 for body-worn cameras. An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classifications and the associated work for the four new staff are as follows:

1.0 FTE Management Analyst 3: The Management Analyst 3 will collaborate with existing staff to ensure integration occurs of BWC video records into the Program's new records management system for storage, ease of use, and distribution. This position will provide overarching business management to the BWC solution. Added FTEs associated with this request allows the Program to effectively utilize data derived from recorded investigations and serious criminal misconduct as required by recently passed legislation. Additionally, this FTE works with staff to use BWC recordings to validate compliance with requirements to record and report allegations of police misconduct and the need to investigate them to determine their validity.

1.0 FTE Forms and Records Analyst 3: The Forms and Records Analyst 3 will assist existing Program staff as well as the FTE listed above and below with the technical aspects of managing records derived from BWC recorded footage in a manner consistent with the process described above. This position will support records management and public records review and redaction of video and audio footage that would be captured by Body Worn Cameras (BWC). Seattle PD estimated that it required approx. eight hours of review per one hour of footage. WDFW receives roughly on average 250 enforcement Public Records Request per year (2019-260, 2020-201, 2021 - 273). Considering that each request would have 1 hour of audio/video redaction, this would equate to approximately 2,000 hours of review and redaction.

Additional requirements will overburden existing staff who are already task saturated with their current workload. Additionally, this FTE collaborates with Program Training Staff to effectively utilize BWC footage towards any identified training and policy deficiencies that need to be addressed. This is essential for all Officers who are in their Field Training phase of employment.

1.0 FTE Entry-IT Customer Support: The Entry-IT Customer Support will collaborate with existing IT and Records staff to ensure the records produced by BWCs are curated and accessible within the Program and Agency IT infrastructure in accordance with existing rules, policies and procedures. This position would be responsible for the operational management and support of hardware related to the integration of the BWC solution. This work supports the audio/video capture devices that the enforcement officers will be leveraging on their persons and in their government vehicles.

Additional requirements will overburden existing staff who are already task saturated with their current workload. Ease of access to the records via PDRs and other processes enhances public trust and increases transparency of operations. Effective storage and compatibility with existing systems also provides senior leaders with data that reinforces legitimacy and confidence in the effectiveness of the Enforcement Program for which they are responsible.

1.0 FTE Journey - IT Systems Administrator: The Journey Level Systems Administrator will provide technical support to the overarching solution. This position will be expected to manage the end-to-end data flow and connectivity of the platform with on prem enforcement Records Management and Computer Added dispatch capabilities. The position will be required to configure and maintain the cloud capable solution in relation to operational and security support including configuration, updates, troubleshooting, and technical management of the platform. Connections of cloud capable solutions require monthly patch management of network devices, configuration management for cloud and on prem service integration, access and identity management, encryption tunnel support, routing, and technical systems administration of the BWC solution.

Additional requirements will overburden existing staff who are already task saturated with their current workload. Ease of access to the records via PDRs and other processes enhances public trust and increases transparency of operations. Effective storage and compatibility with existing systems also provides senior leaders with data that reinforces legitimacy and confidence in the effectiveness of the Enforcement Program for

which they are responsible.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This package supports three of the Governor's goals: 1) sustainable energy and environment, 2) healthy and safe communities, and 3) efficient, effective, and accountable government.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This package supports three strategies in WDFW's 25-Year Strategic Plan: 1) engage communities through recreation and stewardship, 2) model operational and environmental excellence, and deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions.

WDFW Activity Inventory

This package supports five WDFW activities (biennial for 2023-25):

- Preserve & Restore Aquatic Habitat & Species. \$333,000 and 0.8 FTEs
- Acquire & Manage Lands. \$350,000 and 0.9 FTEs
- Preserve & Restore Terrestrial Habitat and Species. \$126,000 and 0.3 FTEs
- Manage Fishing Opportunities. \$556,000 and 1.4 FTEs
- Manage Hunting Opportunities. \$207,000 and 0.5 FTEs
- Provide & Facilitate Recreational Opportunities. \$17,000 and 0.1 FTEs

Performance Outcomes:

This request contributes to the Program's ability to measure and quantify the following existing measures more accurately:

- Compliance Rate of Fish and Wildlife Police Officer contacts.
- Vessels with aquatic invasive species.
- Fisheries in compliance with harvest protection goals.
- Number of vessel safety inspections by Fish and Wildlife Police Officers.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

BWCs assist with identifying opportunities to proactively implement measures that strengthen relationships with traditionally underserved populations that further enhance recreational opportunities. Officers will in turn be able to bridge cultural gaps that are periodically encountered in field environments which will improve relationships with the citizens of WA state over time.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

This investment would have a positive impact on traditionally marginalized and/or underrepresented communities by increasing the transparency and accountability of law enforcement officers.

Target Populations or Communities:

All populations and communities, including those who have been traditionally marginalized, will benefit from this proposal. Please note that 93% of the public favor BWC use by police officers according to a Pew Research Center survey, and a recent State of the Industry Survey identified that 82% of officers surveyed want to wear them on the job.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23: Good Governance and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #163) Increase trust by including and communicating directly and effectively with new and diverse audiences by building WDFW's capacity to support transparent governing processes using body wearable camera technologies that support public expectations for regarding police interactions and accountability. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary Criteria – Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by supporting WDFW enforcement programs through increased public transparency.

State Workforce Impacts:

Both the State Officers' Guild and the Teamsters are requesting BWCs for their represented workers.

Intergovernmental:

BWC usage assists with documenting the Department's efforts to protect treaty rights. Many tribal, city and county departments already utilize BWC and will not oppose the Program's usage of these devices. There are no known impacts to other state agencies. WSP is actively pursuing BWCs as well.

Stakeholder Response:

The Program anticipates support from stakeholders including associations such as Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) as well as the public WDFW police officers serve.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

There are no laws or requirements stating the Program must employ BWCs. However, the requirement to record known felons as well as detainment of juveniles contained in recently passed police reform legislation coupled with the fact that Officers work remotely make employing BWCs essential for the Program.

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

There are no laws or requirements stating the Program must employ BWCs. However, BWCs are recommended as a best practice to address recent legislation requiring Officers to record known felons as well as detainment of juveniles contained in recently passed police reform legislation.

Reference Documents

[BC IT Addendum.docx](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

Yes

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$316	\$316	\$632	\$316	\$316	\$632
Obj. B	\$118	\$118	\$236	\$118	\$118	\$236
Obj. C	\$120	\$120	\$240	\$120	\$120	\$240
Obj. E	\$24	\$24	\$48	\$24	\$24	\$48
Obj. J	\$34	\$0	\$34	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. T	\$205	\$194	\$399	\$194	\$194	\$388

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

There is increased political and social pressure to diversify gears used in the lower Columbia River commercial fishery, especially gears with mark-selective capabilities. With an Emerging Commercial Fishery, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife could assess the viability of alternative gears in a commercial setting. This request will fund commercial alternative gear research to inform fishery implementation questions, monitoring for the emerging commercial fishery, and create a source of funds for the purchase and optimization of gear. Without funding, the Department will not be able to adequately monitor this emerging fishery, further explore the viability of alternative commercial gears, or to incentivize the expanded use of mark-selective commercial gear.

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$1,684	\$1,449	\$3,133	\$1,316	\$1,316	\$2,632
Total Expenditures	\$1,684	\$1,449	\$3,133	\$1,316	\$1,316	\$2,632

Decision Package Description

A combination of factors has caused the decline in mainstem opportunity, including Endangered Species Act (ESA) restrictions, changes to commercial allocations, decreased hatchery production, and current understanding of limitations for other commercial gears. Thus, there is a need to make the most of the commercial allocation provided for in the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission (WFWC) policy by maximizing the harvest of healthy wild and hatchery stocks, while minimizing impacts to unhealthy wild and ESA-listed stocks within harvest constraints.

The impacts of commercial and recreational fisheries are managed through harvest constraints approved by NOAA Fisheries and detailed in management agreements with co-managers. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), along with co-managers, manages commercial and recreational fisheries within those limits, regardless of the gear used or the catch allocation between fisheries.

In 2013, the WFWC adopted Policy C-3620, with the purpose of promoting orderly fisheries, advancing the conservation and recovery of wild salmon and steelhead, and seeking to enhance the economic well-being and stability of the fishing industry in the state. Among various provisions, the policy included direction to develop and implement alternative commercial fishing gears for use in the lower Columbia River. In 2020, when the Commission reviewed and adopted its new policy, C-3630, they reaffirmed the need to advance the alternative gear provision.

The goal of the new policy regarding alternative commercial gear was to promote conservation goals and enhance and optimize economic benefits to commercial and recreational fisheries. Implemented alternative gears will need to increase the selectivity of fishing gear compared to current capabilities, be economically viable for commercial harvesters, and promote state conservation objectives (i.e., controlling hatchery fish on the spawning grounds). In theory, gears with greater selectivity for hatchery fish will be able to harvest more hatchery-origin salmon while using the current number of allowable impacts to wild salmon and steelhead. This would extend commercial fishing seasons, as more opportunity would be allowed before meeting harvest constraints and could potentially increase economic benefits to commercial fishers and their communities.

Gillnets are presently the primary gear used in commercial salmon fisheries. One alternative gear, the tangle net, was developed in the early 2000s and has been implemented for both spring Chinook and coho. A few additional alternative gears have been in development recently: pound nets (a fixed gear) and seines (mobile gears), which were used in the Columbia River prior to being outlawed in the 1930s. Recent legislatures have supported a rekindled interest by appropriating \$7.3 million to-date, and several bills and budget provisos have directed the Department to continue to move forward with these gears by proposing to legalize pound nets and other prohibited gears (proposed Senate Bill 5567 - Concerning commercial salmon fishing, in 2022), and in reporting back to the legislature on statutory, regulatory, and funding changes required to implement alternative gears (legislative proviso in Section 308(65) of the supplemental operating budget ESSB 5693, Laws of 2022).

Since the 2017-19 biennium, the Department has not received additional funding to continue research with alternative gears. Just this past summer, the Department has moved forward with a draft rule to designate an Emerging Commercial Fishery in the lower Columbia River to

further the investigations of alternative gear by allowing pound nets and seines to operate in a commercial setting.

Proposed Solution and Funding Alternatives

The funds requested will support two related elements. The first is for funds to support continued research and development of alternative commercial fishing gear, as well as funds for monitoring the new Emerging Commercial Fishery along with the enhancement of our current commercial fishery monitoring (\$1,216,000 in FY 2024, \$681,000 ongoing). The second element includes funds to assist fishers with purchasing alternative gear, potentially make modifications to that gear as we continue to develop the gear through the Emerging Commercial Fishery, and to assist with site selection prospecting for fixed gear (i.e., pound nets). This element also includes some staff and contractor time to develop the analytical documents necessary for the permitting of fixed gear infrastructure for commercial fishing use (\$468,000 in FY 2024, \$768,000 in FY 2025, and \$635,000 per FY until FY 2027).

This is the best option for addressing the problem, because it allows the Department to work with commercial fishers, stakeholders, and our co-managers within a prescribed framework (the Emerging Commercial Fishery), over a prescribed length of time (~5-years per RCW 77.70.180), to gather information to inform some of the significant unknowns with alternative gear. This request also allows us to address some of the main logistical difficulties we have heard from the commercial industry and stakeholders such as the high capital costs associated with fixed gear and the lengthy and complex permitting process, by providing funds to purchase gear and having the Department engage in the process with the various cities, counties, states, and federal agencies for identifying and vetting potential fixed gear sites.

Without funds for this proposal, we will be unable to adequately monitor the Emerging Commercial Fishery in the lower Columbia River, adaptively research issues and questions that arise by allowing these alternative gears to operate commercially, or further incentivize commercial fisher use of alternative gears.

We are exploring complementary grant funding opportunities to support additional alternative gear work; but have been unsuccessful in competing for these funds to date. Funding the staffing requests in our proposal will allow staff to focus some of their time on grant writing and could yield more success with securing funds in the future.

The legislature could decide to circumvent the Emerging Commercial Fishery process and move forward with legalizing these alternative gears. However, significant unknowns remain for these gears in terms of their potential economic viability (pound nets and purse seines do have high capital costs and substantive operating cost), and their harvest efficiency compared to gill nets and tangle nets. The Emerging Commercial Fishery process allows for some additional time to assess these unknowns in a commercial setting to provide staff with information on which to base a recommendation for gear legalization to the legislature.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

N/A

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, for 5.3 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions total \$447,000, beginning in fiscal year (FY) 2024 and ongoing. Goods and services, object E, include \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year, as well as central agency costs. Additional object E expenditures of \$10,000 per fiscal year are included to train commercial fishery observers. Travel costs, object G, total \$31,000 in FY 2024 and ongoing. Ten seasonal Scientific Technician 2 staff for 3 months per year (522 hours x 10 staff = 3.0 FTE). DES 4x4 truck rental of \$32/day and approximately 1,125 miles at \$0.32 per mile) and \$800 per FTE for per diem/hotel for three month period.

WDFW will contract one-time, object C, in FY 2024 at a cost of \$100,000 with the Washington State Academy of Sciences for a review of the gear mortality rates used by all the non-treaty fisheries in the US v OR Management Agreement. Additional object C expenditures include \$100,000 per year in fiscal years 2024 and 2025 to draft materials (e.g., SEPA, Biological Assessment) as needed to permit a batch of up to ten pound net sites for commercial use; as well as \$30,000 per FY ongoing for research study assistance as needed.

A one-time cost of \$300,000 in FY 2024, object J, will be used to purchase a Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tag array for the Lower Columbia River. Ongoing costs of \$40,000 each fiscal year for PIT tag supplies and processing genetic samples. Pass through funding, object N, total \$30,000 in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing, to cover gear maintenance and repair for fishermen participating in research studies and to assist with purchasing any needed monitoring equipment (e.g., logbooks, cameras, etc.). \$200,000 in FY 2024 and \$500,000 in FY 2025 until FY 2028 is needed to allow fishers to purchase and optimize gear and assist with prospecting for fixed gear sites. An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classification and the associated work for 5.3 FTE are as follows:

Research and Monitoring

0.6 FTE Natural Resource Specialist 4 as project lead to analyze PIT tag detections/CWT recoveries from the emerging commercial fishery, identify contributing stocks, develop an improved commercial fisheries' monitoring plan that incorporates the emerging commercial fishery, and lead design of alternative gear research studies.

0.8 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 2 to assist with PIT tag and CWT analysis, identify contributing stocks, assist with developing the commercial fisheries' monitoring plan and oversee implementation in the field, assist with research study design and implementation.

3.0 FTE Scientific Technician 2 for 10 seasonal technicians for 3 months each year to execute monitoring, collect data, and organize/enter data into a database (Fulltime staff person for 3 months = 522 hours or 0.3 FTE. Ten staff x 0.3 FTE = 3.0 FTE).

Gear Fund

0.4 FTE Natural Resource Specialist 4 as project lead to review gear fund bids form fishermen for technical merit, work with fishermen to identify fixed gear sites, lead any necessary rulemaking and or/permitting for alternative gear.

0.2 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 2 to assist with rulemaking and permitting of alternative gear and 0.3 Fiscal Analyst 4 for administration of the gear fund.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This proposal relates to the Results Washington goal of supporting Healthy and Safe Communities and the goal of Prosperous Economy, by supporting living wage jobs. Washington's coastal communities, especially Pacific, Grays Harbor, and Wahkiakum counties have been hit hard by declining natural resource industries. Coastal communities are often heavily reliant on industries targeting natural resource extraction such as timber and fishing to support their economy. It is our intention that the development of alternative gears will provide a path to creating a stable, economically viable fishery in the lower Columbia River by allowing fishers and managers to choose the best tool(s) with which to harvest the most hatchery-origin fish, while remaining within our conservation objectives.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

The Department's new 25 Year Strategic Plan identifies shifts in how we do things now, to better serve our residents in the future. This decision package addresses the following strategies:

1. Proactively address conservation challenges;
2. Engage communities through recreation and stewardship;
3. Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions; and
4. Model operational and environmental excellence.

This budget request supports strategic plan strategy #1: This request proactively addresses conservation challenges by expanding current efforts to manage and recover at-risk fish species. One example of how this could occur is by allowing more gear options for fishers and managers to choose from to select the best gear for the job. Specifically, the use of alternative gears in areas where gillnets do not operate, may provide commercial fishers with more fishing opportunity, and could further reduce the number of hatchery-origin fish that escape fisheries to spawn.

The Columbia River was historically one of the key food fish fisheries in the state, providing fresh salmon to Washington families that can't access that fresh protein on their own. By supporting this fishery, this project will also support strategic plan strategy #2: "Engage communities through recreation and stewardship." This funding package also would allow us to engage communities through recreation and stewardship over the long-term by championing our partner efforts with the commercial fleet and working collaboratively to achieve shared objectives. Since implementation of alternative gears is dependent on the commercial industry's interest and ability to make these gears economically viable, we need their input and support for all facets of alternative gear development.

This budget request supports strategic plan strategy #3: "Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions." By developing and implementing alternative gears, this request will support the development of a mixed gear commercial fishery that will provide fisheries managers with more flexibility for managing our fisheries.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Manage Fishing Opportunities, 5.3 FTE and \$1,684,000 fiscal year 2024 and \$1,449,000 fiscal year 2025, State General Fund.

This package supports our activity inventory item "Manage Fishing Opportunities" and applicable supporting strategy: Enforce commercial fishing opportunities and regulations.

WDFW is responsible for the management of Washington State commercial and recreational fisheries. Management of these fisheries includes maintaining compliance with complex intersections of tribal treaties, international agreements, case law, federal Endangered Species Act restrictions, and monitoring of species health and populations. To manage fisheries, the Department monitors and manages populations of both shellfish and fin fish, develops negotiates and implements fisheries co-management plans, and markets and sells fishing licenses and manages licenses for commercial fishing groups. To effectively manage fisheries, the Department maintains enforcement presence in all state waters.

Performance Outcomes:

Implementing this new fishery (anticipated for 2023), as directed by our Commission in our Columbia River Salmon Fisheries Policy (C-3630), will be critical for informing the utility and economic viability of alternative gears in the lower Columbia River commercial fishery. If the gears prove viable through the Emerging Commercial Fishery process, then having multiple tools in our gear toolbox will enable fishers to maximize the harvest of hatchery and healthy wild stocks, while minimizing impacts to ESA-listed and other non-target species.

This funding will allow the agency to make progress on the following Performance Outcomes:

- Value of commercial fishing in Washington State
- Mark-selective fisheries
- Fisheries in compliance with harvest protection goals

This proposal will support the management of sustainable fisheries and will allow us to build more consistency and reliability into our management approach so we can provide a more viable commercial fishery. Additionally, this proposal aims to increase mark-selective fishery capability through gear options such as pound nets. Finally, the development of alternative gears could result in further increases in harvest of hatchery-origin salmon using mark-selective gear, while remaining within our harvest constraints.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The Department committed to improving and evolving community engagement with systemically excluded and marginalized communities. Those most directly affected by this proposal are commercial fishers that fish in the lower Columbia River. We have had a Columbia River Alternative Gear Advisory Board/workgroup in place since 2019 to help advise the Department on how to move forward with developing and implementing alternative gear, and we have been meeting with them consistently. This board is comprised of five members from the commercial fishing industry on the Columbia River. One example of how we continue to incorporate their feedback is the inclusion of a gear optimization fund into this proposal to assist with capital costs for alternative gears.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Having alternatives to commercial gillnets may provide communities with options for choosing the best tool for the job in terms of balancing the harvest of target fish while optimizing how impacts to non-target fish are utilized to stay within the various fishery harvest constraints, for the non-treaty fishery as a whole and for the recreational and commercial sectors. However, the ability of a fisher to utilize alternative gear will depend in part on the economic and legal accessibility to the gear. Our proposal attempts to address this by providing a gear optimization fund fishers can apply to for gear costs. Our proposal also provides funding to further work on fixed gear permitting processes and siting, which should help the fishing community understand the process for applying for fixed gear, any associated costs, and potentially how many fixed gears might be considered acceptable by the various regulatory agencies from each of their unique perspectives.

Target Populations or Communities:

Most of the Columbia River commercial fishers reside in Wahkiakum, Pacific, Grays Harbor, Cowlitz, and Clark counties in Washington. These commercial fishers help provide high quality, locally harvested salmon to Washington residents who don't choose to or can't afford to fish for it for themselves. They ensure that this public resource is available to the general public.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

N/A

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

Fisheries in the mainstem Columbia River are managed jointly with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). The Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commissions developed similar policies for development and use of alternative gear, so ODFW is anticipated to be supportive of this effort. The four treaty tribes of the Columbia Basin will be kept apprised of any alternative gear developments and will participate in review of any technical data. One of the four county governments that border the Washington side of the Columbia below Bonneville, Wahkiakum County, has expressed concern about the ongoing loss of commercial fishing opportunity, and may be supportive of efforts to increase commercial fishing activity.

Permitting and siting of fixed gear such as pound nets will require collaboration among county (i.e., Pacific, Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, and Clark), state (WDFW, Department of Ecology, Department of Natural Resources), and federal government entities (the United States Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA Fisheries, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the United States Coast Guard). Although one pound net has currently been installed in Washington to date, it is permitted for research only. We anticipate permitting for commercial use to involve much more public engagement and it is unknown how long this process could take.

Stakeholder Response:

Impacted stakeholders include commercial harvesters and processors, recreational fishers, and conservation organizations. Reactions from the commercial industry will be mixed; some active support for development of new gears and some reservations about replacing existing gears. Those concerns include the increased capital and operational costs associated with the new gears, the change from a gear that requires only a single operator to gears that must be fished with a crew, and political concerns about whether the initial investment required will be recovered.

Recreational support will also likely be mixed. Many recreational fishers believe that gillnets should no longer be used in the Columbia salmon fisheries and will support their replacement with other gears. Others will be opposed, either due to opposition to commercial fisheries in general, or due to the removal of large numbers of marked fish which will reduce success rates in fisheries operating upstream of the commercial gears.

Many conservation organizations will be supportive. One organization participated in development of the pound net as an alternative gear, and strongly supports further implementation. Most conservation organizations support development of mark-selective commercial and recreational gears to increase fishing opportunity and minimize impacts to bycatch. Some organizations may be opposed to installation of fixed gears if siting interferes with meaningful recreational fishing opportunities, river navigability or aesthetic river value.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

This proposal is responsive to Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission Policy C-3630, and the findings of the recent five-year review of the previous policy, C-3620. That review found that implementation of alternative gear was not meeting the initial expectations of the policy, and the Commission concluded that additional resources were necessary to achieve this objective. This proposal is also responsive to a legislative proviso in Section 308(65) of the supplemental operating budget (ESSB 5693, Laws of 2022), which directs the Department to provide recommend changes in program funding to the legislature, to allow for the development and implementation of mark-selective commercial fishing gears.

Reference Documents

- [Emerging Commercial Fishery_SBEIS_6.10.22.pdf](#)
- [Policy Review Committee_Gear Selectivity_072821.pdf](#)
- [WFC Briefing on Commercial Pound Nets.pdf](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$310	\$310	\$620	\$310	\$310	\$620
Obj. B	\$137	\$137	\$274	\$137	\$137	\$274
Obj. C	\$230	\$130	\$360	\$30	\$30	\$60
Obj. E	\$41	\$41	\$82	\$41	\$41	\$82
Obj. G	\$31	\$31	\$62	\$31	\$31	\$62
Obj. J	\$340	\$40	\$380	\$40	\$40	\$80
Obj. N	\$230	\$530	\$760	\$530	\$530	\$1,060
Obj. T	\$365	\$230	\$595	\$197	\$197	\$394

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

To make informed management decisions that meet conservation goals for public lands, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is partnering with Washington State Parks, Washington Department of Natural Resources and tribal co-managers in seeking resources to develop a data management system, a plan to improve public access opportunities for all people, and an implementation strategy for that plan. This work requires data to be collected, managed, and analyzed on how outdoor recreation, climate change, weeds, and other factors impact fish and wildlife habitat. This investment will advance more informed decision making based on best science and publicly shared indicators of the ecological health of public lands, creating a balance between conservation and the increasing demand for outdoor recreation. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	2.1	5.0	3.55	5.0	5.0	5.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$432	\$878	\$1,310	\$878	\$878	\$1,756
Total Expenditures	\$432	\$878	\$1,310	\$878	\$878	\$1,756

Decision Package Description

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) serves residents and visitors by protecting, restoring, and enhancing the ecosystems that support fish and wildlife. WDFW manages about one million acres of land distributed in wildlife areas across the state.

As the state population has grown, visitation to WDFW-managed and other public lands has too. Impacts from recreation, coupled with stressors, such as climate change, weed infestation, and land development adjacent to public lands require more robust planning and public land management to ensure the ongoing availability of outdoor spaces for recreation and conservation purposes. With a need for increased management comes a need for better data to inform management and communicate to the public how decisions are made affecting accessibility and the overall health of the lands managed on their behalf.

To make informed and adaptive management decisions on WDFW-managed lands, credible data on how human activities affect the structural and biological integrity of ecosystems needs to be collected, monitored, and evaluated. Data is also needed to report to the legislature and public on the “the current state of agency-managed lands, the desired state, and actions needed to achieve the desired state” as requested in a 2017 study from the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC). The purpose of this project is to provide the technical advice and support necessary to collect and interpret those data.

Washington treaty tribes have expressed concern about the growing impact of outdoor recreation on habitat and wildlife and have asked public land managers to collaborate in addressing this growing threat.

In the 2020 legislative session, a “stewardship needs proviso” passed the Legislature (ESSB 6168 Section 304(7), 2020 Supplemental Operating Budget) for the Recreation Conservation Office, WDFW, Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Washington State Parks (State Parks) to begin this coordinated effort, but was vetoed by the Governor, along with many others in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. WDFW is working alongside these sister agencies to put forward a unified request in the 2023-25 biennium to ensure consistent development and use of data to inform management to address resource impacts on state lands.

Proposed Solution

This proposal will enhance WDFW’s ability to inventory and assess the health of ecosystems on WDFW-managed lands, report stewardship needs, and make evidence-based policy and management decisions. It will also increase the transparency of WDFW management decisions for tribal governments, partners, lawmakers, and the general public. In coordination with State Parks and DNR, WDFW will refine and apply an Ecological Inventory Assessment (EIA) system on WDFW-managed lands. This work will include coordinating with federally recognized tribes to integrate their values into this monitoring and adaptive management approach. Specifically, WDFW proposes to coordinate with state partners and tribes to:

1. **Refine** the EIA methodology for use across ecosystem types.

Partner with the Washington Department of Natural Resources' Natural Heritage Program (WNHP) to refine the methodology for ecological integrity assessment across ecological system types, including wetland, riparian, shrubsteppe and forested habitats.

The refined methodology will define the sampling intensity for an area, establish its ecological condition, and determine its best attainable condition. Best attainable conditions are determined on a case-by-case basis through an integrated assessment of both site- and landscape scale ecological conditions and stressors. The methodology also will establish a process for reporting on the health of habitats, monitoring conditions over time, and using trend data to inform adaptive management.

2. Customize the EIA methodology for monitoring recreation impacts.

WDFW will review literature and confer with partners and tribal governments to identify recreation impacts of greatest conservation concern and work with WHNP to tailor EIA to measure and monitor for those impacts.

WHNP has developed a human stressor index as a companion to the EIA methodology to analyze the human activities or processes causing the degradation of an area. In coordination with Parks, WDFW will contract with WHNP to refine the stressor checklist to monitor a diversity of recreation types and related concerns on WDFW-managed lands.

3. Identify target areas for monitoring impacts.

WDFW will coordinate with tribal co-managers, DNR and State Parks to prioritize locations for assessment. Priority areas may include high value conservation areas with a concentration of human stressors, including recreation.

1. Map target areas by overlaying a visitation model created by nonprofit Earth Economics with sensitive habitat mapping.
2. Coordinate with land managers to select areas for early analysis.
3. Ground truth selected target areas with co-managers and stakeholders from the conservation and recreation communities.
4. Continue to acquire visitation data to identify visitation trends and change.

4. Build capacity for performing EIAs across WDFW-managed lands.

Once the EIA methodology is in place and areas are targeted for monitoring, WDFW will contract WNHP to conduct in-office and in-the-field training for fish and wildlife biologists to perform the monitoring.

5. Implement the monitoring framework beginning in target areas.

Implementation will include collecting, managing and analyzing data. WDFW also will develop a process for responding to data demonstrating a need for more or less on-the-ground management. This will contribute to successful planning and adaptive land management.

1. Pilot methodology in target area(s)
2. Develop scaling strategy
3. Scale implementation

About Ecological Inventory Assessment

The Ecological Inventory Assessment (EIA) system developed by NatureServe and the Natural Heritage Network measures the ecological integrity of a site through a standardized and repeatable assessment of current conditions compared to those associated with "healthy" areas, i.e., areas within the natural range of variability associated with the structure, composition, and function of an ecosystem exposed to minimal human-induced impacts.

EIA addresses a number of objectives including: (1) assessment of ecological integrity on a fixed, objective scale; (2) comparison of ecological integrity of various occurrences of the same ecological systems; (3) determination of, and support for, conservation priorities; (4) improved decisions on monitoring individual ecological attributes; and (5) provision of an aggregated index of integrity to interpret monitoring data.

State land managers have worked with the EIA system for the past decade. In 2011, WDFW contracted with DNR's Natural Heritage Program (WNHP) to adapt the EIA method as an approach for measuring ecological integrity on State Wildlife Areas. More recently, elements of EIA have been integrated into the Department's grazing program to monitor the condition of lands where grazing is permitted.

In 2019, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission contracted with WNHP to use EIAs to gather relevant information for future

planning, surveys, and conservation of vegetation resources on their properties.

Alternatives Considered

WDFW considered multiple options on how to best design methodologies and obtain data that is essential in reducing impacts to public lands based on the following factors: Maintaining the status quo- decision-making based on observations of conditions relevant to indeterminate base conditions and reliance on anecdotal evidence for determining the compatibility of recreation types and intensities on WDFW-managed lands- would continue to allow mostly unrestricted recreation as land managers don't have the tools to make defensible changes to management.

Treaty tribes have suggested that resource impacts on public lands from recreation are already beyond acceptable and access should be reduced as a result. During April and May of 2020, WDFW-managed lands were closed due to COVID concerns. That showed, as expected, the porous nature of these lands makes it difficult, if not impossible, to functionally close them. The result was that those that followed the rules stayed home while those who did not continued to visit. This was a challenge for management and equity. What would be preferable is to use strategic and data-informed management approaches to direct use away from sensitive areas and toward more durable areas.

In 2019, WDFW estimated the full cost of being able to measure and report stewardship needs across three categories (natural resources, recreation and infrastructure resources, and cultural resources) at over \$23 million over three biennia (see attached JLARC 18_01 Rec3 Report). That figure was seen as impractical by the Legislature. The work attempts to focus the request to develop the methodology to identify ecosystems of interest and customize the measurements to the impact of recreation.

DFW-managed lands are operating well-below functional funding capacity for operations and maintenance. The average estimated cost of full-service management for wildlife areas is \$52 per acre. The Department manages just under a million acres of these lands at under \$25 million a year, just half of what is estimated to be needed to effectively maintain them. WDFW's water access areas are in even worse shape, although the recent increase in funding for recreation infrastructure backlog is improving the situation. Regardless, there are not excess funds to contribute to this effort, going so far as to suspend pursuit of this work for the past several years to focus on foundational work that points us to this need.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This decision package is an expansion to a current program and brings accountability and adaptive management to the requirement to steward WDFW-managed lands for conservation and recreation (as well as other state lands when combined with State Parks and DNR analogous requests). It allows us to track the health of these lands in response to management actions and ensure that impacts can be addressed. As such, this package builds upon the state investment of billions of dollars to acquire and manage these lands for their conservation and recreation values.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, total \$261,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$568,000 in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing. Goods and services, object E, includes \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year. Contracted services, object C, total \$50,000 in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing, includes ongoing data acquisition and reporting costs and allows the Department to continue to work with Earth Economics to acquire anonymized cell phone data and report visitor use numbers and patterns on WDFW owned lands. State Parks and DNR are also contributing to this overall cost.

Travel, object G, totals \$10,000 beginning in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing, for the two Fish and Wildlife Biologists. Travel costs for each employee totals \$5,161 per fiscal year. A DES long-term vehicle rental for a sedan totals \$3,456 for the monthly rate (\$288 monthly rate x 12 months) and mileage rate \$1,705 (5,500 annual miles x \$0.28 per mile charge). An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classification and the associated work for 5.0 FTE are as follows:

1.0 FTE Environmental Planner 4 (EP4) to project manage the work and integrate the approach into wildlife area and recreation planning efforts. 0.8 FTE in fiscal year 2024 and 1.0 FTE in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing, due to anticipated hiring delays for specialized knowledge position.

1.0 FTE IT Data Management Journey to develop and manage the data stream on an ongoing basis. 0.5 FTE in fiscal year 2024 and 1.0 FTE in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing. Fiscal year 2024 reduced FTE for initial input into how to structure the data but won't begin to manage anything until the methodology is complete and ready for implementation.

1.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Research Scientist 1 to work in collaboration with the EP4, and DNR's Natural Heritage Program, to refine the methodology for ecological integrity assessment across ecological system types, including wetland, riparian, shrubsteppe, and forested habitats and customize it to measure recreation impacts. Ongoing need to train biologists, refine, and adapt the methodology. 0.8 FTE in fiscal year 2024 and 1.0 FTE in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing, due to anticipated hiring delays for specialized knowledge position.

2.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 2, beginning in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing, to perform the monitoring once the methodology is developed.

All staff costs are calculated as 2088 hours / 12 months = 174 hours per month.

*Some amount of time from a Biometrician will be necessary but will be prioritized within the existing workload. Future projects may necessitate a second biometrician to support growing needs. It is assumed that current capacity in our existing Stewardship Section Manager and Recreation and Planning Section Manager will aid in the internal and external partner collaboration elements of this work. The Lands Division Manager and Tribal Liaison will also be involved with the collaboration work.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve the following Results Washington Goals: Efficient, Effective, and Accountable Government. Measuring and monitoring the stewardship needs of WDFW-managed lands is a pathway to greater accountability. It is also critical to ensure performance management and continuous improvement. This is fundamental to adaptive management that is required on an ongoing basis.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

The WDFW 25-year strategic plan states that “the Department must demonstrate bold leadership in conservation, recovery, science, and management in order to better achieve its mission.” This project contributes to this goal under the following strategic plan priorities.

1. Proactively address conservation challenges:

- Ensure that land-use planning and decisions are contributing to the conservation and recovery of fish and wildlife.

The measurement and monitoring of human stressors and impacts on WDFW-managed habitats is critical for making evidence-based policy and management decisions that support the conservation of fish and wildlife.

2. Deliver science that informs Washington’s most pressing fish and wildlife questions:

- Ensure that science is supporting adaptive management.
- Develop an agency-level data management system to provide better science for agency decision-making and constituent outreach.

This proposal supports the development of a data system and application of best science to the adaptive management of WDFW-managed lands in a manner that balances conservation with recreation uses.

3. Engage communities through recreation & stewardship:

- Develop and implement a plan to improve public access opportunities for all people by developing and broadening partnerships to promote a broad spectrum of sustainable recreation and stewardship opportunities in all areas, including urban zones.
- Ensure that decision-making processes are transparent and easy to participate in.

This effort will help to define “sustainable recreation” in a way that can be measured and operationalized across WDFW-managed lands. It also will provide a transparent decision-making process that can be shared across WDFW and other state lands.

4. Move WDFW towards operational & environmental excellence:

- Adapt decision making based on publicly shared performance goals and indicators.
- Increase decision transparency to both internal and external audiences

The primary purpose of this project is to enable decision making based on publicly shared indicators of the ecological health of WDFW-managed lands.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Acquire & Manage Lands, 2.1 FTE and \$432,000 in fiscal year 2024 and 5.0 FTE and \$878,000 in fiscal year 2025, General Fund-State.

This package supports the Department’s activity inventory item “Acquire & Manage Lands” and applicable support strategy:

- Maintain and enhance habitat for hunting, fishing, and conservation on WDFW owned and managed lands

The Department manages more than 1 million acres of land, divided into 33 wildlife management areas. Staff manage these lands to maintain and improve fish and wildlife habitat and provide wildlife-related recreational opportunities. This is accomplished through a variety of actions, including weed control, timber thinning and management (to help control wildfire and improve habitat quality), maintaining infrastructure (fences, signs, parking lots, trails, culverts, water control structures, wells, and irrigation systems), and removing garbage and litter. The Department also conducts wildlife surveys, restores, and enhances habitat for game species and a diversity of other wildlife, and manages public uses on Department-managed lands to protect habitat and to ensure these activities are compatible with fishing, hunting, and other wildlife-related recreation.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department’s ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Priority research needs being met

The stewardship of over one million acres of WDFW-managed lands will be actively monitored to inform planning and adaptive management that supports ecosystem health across the diverse landscapes managed by the Department. State lawmakers in both houses and the general public will be informed about the health (ecological integrity/habitat quality) and stewardship of lands and provided education on how science informs visitor access decisions. This reporting will begin in select pilot areas and expanded as capacity allows.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

Washington treaty tribes initiated a collaboration with WDFW to address growing concerns about outdoor recreational impacts to habitat and wildlife. Tribal co-managers have provided key input to target the ecological threat WDFW will research with this funding request and WDFW will continue to coordinate with tribal co-managers to prioritize locations for assessment. Collaboration with tribal governments are integral to the development of the data collection methodology for this proposal.

In addition, WDFW recently developed a Recreation Strategy for WDFW-managed lands, this included a 49-day SEPA comment period and Spanish translation and outreach in early 2022. A significant theme in the comments identified the need to be able to manage impacts from recreation to safeguard conservation values and this funding request responds to that need.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

This proposal would disproportionately impact the communities who rely on public lands for outdoor recreation in the short term. Tribal co-managers have expressed deep concern that current recreation numbers on public lands have already exceeded the carrying capacity and have suggested a reduction in public access to curb the ecological impacts of recreation. WDFW has found that complete closure of public lands is near impossible due to their permeable boundaries, but it is possible that the most cost-effective strategy to preserve the ecological integrity of public lands would require some restrictions of use and access.

Target Populations or Communities:

WDFW owns and manages land in all counties of Washington State. Public lands are particularly critical for lower income people who do not own property and must derive direct outdoor experiences and benefits from access to public spaces. Additionally, rural economies in Washington State are reliant on functioning ecological integrity to support working lands and recreation economies.

Monitoring and managing the impact of recreation and stewardship activities impacts all Washingtonians. This package is designed to center tribal use and cultural values by identifying metrics related to their protection. The Department will use these metrics in the monitoring and adaptive management framework. Providing outdoor recreation in a way that protects cultural and natural resources in the long-term will ensure protections of universal ecosystem services. It will preserve public access to quality ecological infrastructure and the health benefits of outdoor natural spaces.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship and is directly aligned with Action (ID#159) Develop, fund, and promote culturally relevant projects and programs to encourage and incentivize behavior changes that will protect, restore, and enable responsible enjoyment and stewardship of Puget Sound by implementing key opportunity, Increase understanding of the connections between outdoor recreation and stewardship activities. Through these efforts this decision package also indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy 1: Protect and restore vital salmon habitat.

This decision package implements the Priority Action 15 Explore and advance the use of methods to integrate human dimensions with biophysical targets and goals by decision makers from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by refining and applying an Ecological Inventory Assessment (EIA) system investigating ecosystem health, recreation, and stewardship uses to adaptively manage WDFW-managed lands in coordination with State Parks, DNR, and with federally recognized tribes to integrate their values into this monitoring and adaptive management approach.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

WDFW has worked in collaboration with State Parks and DNR to contract Earth Economics to complete an assessment of state land visitation from 2019-2021. Earth Economics utilized anonymized cell phone data to demonstrate a 12% increase of use on state lands from 2019 – 2020. The Earth Economics tool can be used on an ongoing basis to determine changes in visitor use and inform the selection of high use areas that need focused monitoring and adaptive management. All three agencies are working together to standardize land classification and planning approaches so that the monitoring methodologies developed through this decision package will inform management consistently across the state lands system. The corresponding decision package from State Parks - “SL – Manage Impacts to State Lands” and included in the anticipated from DNR as “Manage Impacts to State Lands and Tribal Treaty Rights.” This body of work has been prioritized to responsibly manage our conservation and outdoor recreation obligations.

Several federally recognized tribes in Washington have deep concerns regarding the impact of recreation on public lands and on their treaty-guaranteed resources and rights. A series of six meetings were held between October 2020 and September 2021 regarding recreation on state lands and included calls from multiple tribes for the management of outdoor recreation impacts on treaty rights, beginning with an analysis of those assessments across state lands (see attached memo). The tribes also sent a letter in March 2021 to the Governor requesting that he convene a task force to address this issue. While the request was an agenda topic at the 2021 Centennial Accords, the Governor has not formerly responded with an approach. WDFW has continued discussion with interested tribes and this Decision Package offers a specific point of collaboration to address the concerns that they have raised. Letters from the Snoqualmie Tribe and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission that express their concerns and requests related to this need are included (see attachments).

In 2016, the State Legislature directed the Joint Legislative Audit Committee (JLARC) to review outcomes related to land acquisition and habitat regulations. The resultant report concluded that measuring outcomes of land acquisition success would be improved through agency investment in monitoring. JLARC further recommended that WDFW, the State Parks and Recreation Commission, and DNR “should provide the Legislature with a plan detailing the resources necessary to report stewardship needs.” The resulting report (see attachment) from WDFW, DNR and Parks estimated the need based on EIA and other monitoring. This proposal represents a more tactical, and less expensive, application of EIA to begin addressing the need outlined by JLARC. Additionally, the 2022 Supplemental Budget from the Legislature included \$5 million ongoing for each of these agencies to address recreation infrastructure backlogs. The current Decision Package would provide a clear methodology and capacity to measure and manage impacts to ecological and cultural resources associated with recreation use.

Stakeholder Response:

Conservation and recreation groups are keenly interested in measuring and managing human impacts on natural resources. Intact and healthy ecosystems provide the foundation for quality outdoor experiences and the health of present and future generations. The following are key organizations that have already indicated support for this work. Specific requests for support will be made during the fall of 2022.

- Recreate Responsibly Coalition (over 100 member organizations, see attachment for more information, includes the Access Fund, Washington Trails Association, Backcountry Horsemen of Washington, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, The Mountaineers, the Northwest Motorcycle Association, the Northwest Tourism Alliance) – These groups are eager to contribute to the conservation of public lands that they rely on for recreation use. Anticipated support
- Conservation Northwest offered support during the 10 Year Recreation Strategy for WDFW-managed Lands comment period
- Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition sponsored a budget proviso that contained these concepts that passed the legislature in the 2020 session but was vetoed due to the COVID economic situation. Anticipated support

The general public will support the accountability and data-driven adaptive management that allow clear management actions in alignment with the conservation and recreation mandate of WDFW. Specifically, we have learned from marketing research in our Lands Showcase that while the public expects and values recreation access, they are willing to accept limitations on that access in response to a clear rationale of the benefit of such limitations on conservation values.

State Facilities Impacts:

This research methodology may reveal resource impacts that require infrastructure work to address – such as gates or access blockages, signage, trail hardening or reinforcement, structures to improve fish passage, work to reduce streambank erosion, and more. This infrastructure

work would be funded through existing infrastructure funding and/or additional funding requests for specific projects.

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

This proposal is in response to WDFW’s responsibility to manage public lands pursuant to the Department’s mission, fiduciary requirements that come with federal and state acquisition funding, as well as the intent of Chapter 79a.15 RCW (Acquisition of Habitat Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Lands), “It is therefore the policy of the state to acquire as soon as possible the most significant lands for wildlife conservation and outdoor recreation purposes before they are converted to other uses, and to develop existing public recreational land and facilities to meet the needs of present and future generations.”

There is extensive interest revolving around measurement of conservation outcomes associated with land acquisition. Related to these responsibilities, the legislature has been clear in their desire to ensure that our ownership and management produce conservation and recreation outcomes for the public. This can be seen in the following JLARC reports:

2019: Measuring Outcomes of Land Acquisitions and Regulations: Response to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) 18-01 Final Report: Land Acquisitions and Regulations, Recommendation #3

Reference Documents

- [2020_2021 WDFW Recreation Tribal Engagement Summary.docx](#)
- [JLARC_18_01_Rec3_Final.pdf](#)
- [Manage Impacts to State Lands - IT addendum.docx](#)
- [NWIFC Comments on WDFW 10YR Rec Stratgy for WDFW Managed Lands 3.4.22.pdf](#)
- [NWIFC Recreational Impacts Letter to Governor Inslee 3.8.21.pdf](#)
- [Recreate_Responsibly_Coalition_Overview_2022.pdf](#)
- [Snoqualmie Tribe Comments on WDFW Rec Strategy.pdf](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

Yes

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$194	\$416	\$610	\$416	\$416	\$832
Obj. B	\$67	\$152	\$219	\$152	\$152	\$304
Obj. C	\$50	\$50	\$100	\$50	\$50	\$100
Obj. E	\$13	\$30	\$43	\$30	\$30	\$60
Obj. G	\$0	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$20
Obj. T	\$108	\$220	\$328	\$220	\$220	\$440

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Department of Fish and Wildlife
 2023-25 Regular Budget Session
 Policy Level - GS - Geoduck Stock Assessment

Agency Recommendation Summary

This proposal requests a change to the current funding structure for important geoduck stock assessment and research, in which Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife staff are funded through a Washington State Department of Natural Resources contract, by providing a direct appropriation to WDFW. Fully funding this workload supports the sustainability of this unique fishery and ensures that the state meets tribal co-manager obligations. The geoduck fishery is the source of tens of millions of dollars in annual direct revenue for the state, as well as economic opportunity for tribal and non-tribal participants. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$665	\$665	\$1,330	\$665	\$665	\$1,330
Total Expenditures	\$665	\$665	\$1,330	\$665	\$665	\$1,330

Decision Package Description

Currently, WDFW performs geoduck stock assessment, research, and environmental impact assessment through an interagency agreement with Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). WDFW has not recouped indirect charges in those contracts, which are necessary to support the WDFW scientific dive team. DNR does not have additional funds to cover indirect charges. If indirect were included in the current budget, WDFW would be forced to lay off divers. Since a dive team requires four FTEs to function safely and efficiently, the layoff of any staff would severely impact the ability to conduct the fishery and meet obligations with tribal co-managers.

In addition to the current funding challenges, recent WDFW research evaluating the fishery model that fishery managers use to set harvest quotas suggests that the geoduck fishery as it's administered now wouldn't be sustainable long-term. Some areas have been closed to all harvest. This investment is critical to insuring that in the long term, the geoduck fishery will be a sustainable source of state revenue and economic opportunity. The state and tribal governments are collaborating on a new management system that will enhance this long-term sustainability. However, implementing the new system includes more frequent stock assessment surveys. Therefore, demands on the geoduck dive team have only increased in recent years—further underscoring the critical need for investing in WDFW's full existing dive team.

To address the challenges described above, WDFW requests new spending authority from General-Fund State (GF-S) including indirect charges for geoduck stock assessment, research, and environmental assessment. Support for this proposal allows WDFW to maintain its existing scientific dive team, including all staff that are critical to conducting fisheries management. WDFW and DNR will continue to conduct an orderly fishery and generate state revenue, while now adequately covering administrative costs. Furthermore, WDFW will be able to meet obligations to co-managers with increased geoduck tract surveys to support a new management system, sustainable management of the resource, and to maintain full functionality and safety in its critical dive operations.

Consequences of Not Funding the Package

If the spending authority request is not funded, and no additional arrangement can be made with DNR to cover interagency indirect rates, WDFW will be forced to lay-off one diver and fund an additional diver at a reduced 2/3 time. Due to safety reasons, a functioning dive team needed to complete geoduck stock assessment surveys requires four divers. Laying off a single diver severely impacts the team's ability to conduct the necessary surveys safely and severely hampers the ability of the team to accomplish all the annual stock assessment projects critical to sustainably managing the fishery.

WDFW is the only agency or entity with the necessary scientific dive capacity and expertise to carry out this work, and as such, is also a critical leader in this realm. Annual stock assessment work is already streamlined through prioritization; due to the large number of sites and research questions and the scale of the Puget Sound geography, individual sites are generally surveyed according to a periodic basis.

DNR could provide full funding in the current interagency agreement. The 2021-23 biennium contract amount is \$850,000. This amount does not include the WDFW agency indirect rate (the fiscal year 2022 rate is 33.50%), so there is an annual loss of \$142,375. There could be an amendment to the contract to increase the amount from \$850,000 to \$1,134,750. The increased funds would go toward the program and agency administrative costs and specifically toward the administrative staff workload of managing the contract and accounts receivable accounting transactions. Additionally, as staff receive salary increases over time, the state's ability to accurately project and fund increased costs are not supported by the compensation impact model's (CIM) standard operating functionality. Increased appropriation authority could be provided to either agency, but the more efficient option is to directly fund WDFW.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This proposal provides ongoing funding, via a direct appropriation to the Department, to support four existing permanent staff who are dedicated to management of the geoduck fishery, including stock assessment, environmental impact assessment, research, and co-management responsibilities. The proposal also indirectly supports the same activities in sea cucumber, sea urchin, and scallop fisheries as well as endangered Pinto abalone recovery and a WDFW agency-wide dive safety program.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and benefits for 4.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions totals \$413,000 for fiscal year 2024 and ongoing. Goods and services, object E, includes \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year. Additional goods and services total \$51,280 for the following: \$8,000 each year for new scuba gear and the needed upkeep and maintenance of current scuba gear, \$15,000 for vessel maintenance, \$11,000 for vessel fuel, \$8,000 for dive pay (scuba diver hazard pay), \$5,280 for Nitrox air fills, and \$4,000 for other needed equipment and supplies during peak seasons.

Travel costs, object G, total \$10,000 in FY 2024 and ongoing and consists of \$9,300 to cover per diem and lodging expenses for four staff traveling (for multiple day projects at various sample sites) and \$960 for a daily vehicle rental for three weeks. \$59 per diem X 15 days = \$885 x 4 FTE = \$3,540 per diem. \$96 lodging per day X 15 days = \$1,440 x 4 FTE = \$5,760 lodging Pacific County cost estimate. Small 4x4 Truck total cost of \$960 DES daily rental for a cost of (15 days x \$32 = \$480) and mileage cost of \$ (100 miles per day x \$0.32 = \$32 x 15 days = \$480). An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in Object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classification and the associated work for 4.0 FTE are as follows:

2.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Biologist 2 are responsible for dive and stock assessment logistics, including vessel operation and maintenance, survey planning, dive equipment maintenance and operation; data management, analysis, and synthesis; co-manager communication; support of fisheries managers; and critical in-water dive survey work across several fisheries and abalone recovery work.

1.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Biologist 3 is a scientist contributing to and leading geoduck research to support advancement in understanding of the geoduck resource and sustainable management of the geoduck fishery; management of the scallop fishery; various co-management roles; and critical in-water dive survey work across several fisheries and abalone recovery work.

1.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Research Scientist 1 is the lead scientist and manager for the entire dive program, which manages geoduck, sea cucumber, sea urchin, scallop, and octopus resources as well as Endangered pinto abalone recovery for the state of Washington, and dive safety for the entire Department. This position oversees all aspects of management and research as well as all the administrative oversight of the work unit and relevant agency assets (including two research vessels). The position also represents the Department in co-management of relevant fisheries and leads and participates in critical in-water dive survey work across several fisheries and abalone recovery work.

All staff costs are calculated as 2088 hours / 12 months – 174 hours per month.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve the Results Washington Goal of a Prosperous Economy by supporting state and tribal commercial fishing opportunity.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

WDFW's proposal connects to the 25-Year Strategic Plan by proactively addressing conservation challenges—including the implementation of a new, more sustainable geoduck management model; through research to better understand and advance management of the geoduck resource. It similarly helps to deliver science that informs some of Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions through that same research capacity. Finally, it also connects with Modelling Operational and Environmental Excellence by improving (and maintaining) staff safety, as the dive team oversees the agency-wide Dive Safety program.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Manage Fishing Opportunities 4.0 FTE and \$665,000 fiscal year 2024 and ongoing, General Fund-State funding.

- This package supports our activity inventory item "Manage Fishing Opportunities" and applicable support strategy: Monitor and manage shellfish populations

WDFW assesses and monitors shellfish resources to ensure harvest and resource management actions are sustainable and grounded in sound science. To understand what fishery resources are available, Department staff conduct shellfish population surveys. To maximize recreational and commercial opportunities and minimize risks to the viability of wild populations, the Department develops and uses shellfish management harvest models that consider the spatial and temporal variability of shellfish abundance. The Department cooperatively manages shellfish fisheries with treaty tribes. These state-tribal shellfish harvest management plans ensure that fisheries are conducted to meet sustainability and conservation goals.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the maintenance of the Department's existing dive team and staff and all its activities, and thus the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Indicators:

- Priority research needs being met
- Value of commercial fishing in Washington state

This proposal supports the continued function of the agency's dive team, critical to monitoring and managing state revenue-generating geoduck. Support for this proposal avoids the need to reduce or abandon priority research, critical to supporting short and long-term fishery opportunity and ecosystem health.

Commercial geoduck fishing generates tens of millions of dollars in direct revenue for the state. Geoduck stock assessment and research is critical to managing and executing a sustainable geoduck fishery, which in turn supports commercial fishing and revenue generation tied to the geoduck resources and supports the management and execution of sustainable sea cucumber, sea urchin, and scallop fisheries. Support for this proposal avoids the need to lay off WDFW divers, which would in turn result in impacts to geoduck and other fisheries. Examples include fewer tracts available to harvest for both state and tribal fishers (and less revenue for the state); hampered ability to track recovery of previous harvest sites for future harvest; and undermining of new sustainable (and critically needed) management approaches and pursuit of research questions to improve management of dive fisheries. Support for this proposal avoids both short-term and long-term economic impact to both commercial fishers and state revenue.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

WDFW is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. WDFW co-manages shellfish fisheries with Washington treaty tribes. In response to recent WDFW fishery assessments that suggest the geoduck fishery is not viable in the long-term, state agencies and tribal governments began collaborating on a new management system that will increase sustainability. These state-tribal shellfish harvest management plans ensure that fisheries are conducted to meet sustainability and conservation goals.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

This proposal primarily impacts both state and tribal commercial fishers in Puget Sound. This funding request is essential to ensure long-term sustainable geoduck harvests. The Department anticipates no further disproportional impacts to other communities not included in this proposal.

Target Populations or Communities:

This proposal primarily impacts state and tribal fishing communities, both of which support WDFW's continued work on geoduck stock assessment. The Department's proposal supports continued economic opportunity for both state and tribal fishers around Puget Sound. Geoduck harvesting is an important source of income for state geoduck divers and license-holders, state seafood buyers and dealers, and provides significant revenue to state funds that support various state programs. Furthermore, WDFW's proposal supports continued economic opportunity for tribal geoduck harvesters around Puget Sound, as they also benefit directly from the work of WDFW divers. For many tribal members around the region, geoduck harvest represents a significant portion of annual income. Tribal seafood buyers also benefit, and as tribal governments also collect taxes on geoduck harvest, tribal programs are also supported by geoduck harvest and the sustainable management underpinned by the WDFW dive team. Indirectly, many communities, including rural ones, benefit from the economic activity connected to geoduck harvest occurring in the area (through geoduck fleet expenditures in local economies—moorage, fuel, food, and supplies, etc.).

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 25: Economic Benefits by increasing capacity to support stock assessment, research, and environment programs that ensure a sustainable geoduck fishery industry in Puget Sound. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Food and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 91) Improve appropriate access opportunities for harvesting local foods and other culturally significant materials on public lands and shorelines by increasing capacity to support stock assessment, research, and environment programs that ensure a safe, local, and sustainable geoduck industry and harvest in Puget Sound. Through these efforts this decision package also implements the Priority Action 3 Assess the degree, and how, access to marine and coastal resources (e.g. fisheries, open space, native foods) is changing among different communities in the Salish Sea from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

This proposal supports work that is fundamental to both state and tribal commercial geoduck fisheries. WDFW and DNR have a long history of collaborating on geoduck stock assessments, with DNR providing the funding to support WDFW divers who perform the work. If this proposal were not funded, both WDFW and DNR would be without adequate funding for the necessary stock assessment surveys needed to support commercial fishery and would directly impact state revenue. WDFW divers perform a majority of the stock assessment surveys in Puget Sound, and if WDFW were forced to lay off divers, it would also negatively impact the tribal commercial geoduck fishery. This comes at a time when WDFW is also working with DNR to understand the health of Washington's kelp forests and potential climate impacts.

This decision package was developed in coordination with DNR, which fully supports this proposal. The Department anticipates Puget Sound co-manager treaty tribes will also support the request.

Stakeholder Response:

Additional stakeholders impacted by this funding request include commercial geoduck fishers, local Washington seafood buyers and dealers, Puget Sound Restoration Fund, and various academic institutions. The Department anticipates all parties would support the request.

State Facilities Impacts:

The funding requested supports current staff and no new impacts to state facilities are anticipated.

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$298	\$298	\$596	\$298	\$298	\$596
Obj. B	\$115	\$115	\$230	\$115	\$115	\$230
Obj. E	\$75	\$75	\$150	\$75	\$75	\$150
Obj. G	\$10	\$10	\$20	\$10	\$10	\$20
Obj. T	\$167	\$167	\$334	\$167	\$167	\$334

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Agency Recommendation Summary

Southern Resident killer whales, (hereafter referred to as Southern Resident orcas), Chinook salmon, forage fish, and other species in Puget Sound are exposed to thousands of toxic chemicals, from the water they swim in and the prey they eat. This investment would allow the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to track Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CECs) in the orca and salmon food web. This work leverages WDFW's existing long-term toxics monitoring program by adding funds to analyze CECs in already collected tissue samples. This important research will accelerate recovery and protection of endangered orcas and threatened Chinook salmon by identifying the location and sources of CEC exposure, which is critical to reducing toxic chemicals in Puget Sound. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 23P - 1	\$1,206	\$1,206	\$2,412	\$1,206	\$1,206	\$2,412
Total Expenditures	\$1,206	\$1,206	\$2,412	\$1,206	\$1,206	\$2,412

Decision Package Description

Governor Inslee’s Orca Task Force recommended identifying and tracking Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CECs) in Puget Sound’s aquatic life as a high priority intervention for Southern Resident orca recovery (Recommendation 33), but this activity was not funded. Southern Resident orcas, which the Endangered Species Act (ESA) list as endangered, need immediate and sustained action to prevent their extinction. Their recovery depends on full implementation of Recommendation 33, including the actions described herein. In addition to the specific CEC threat to Southern Resident orcas, the Washington State Legislature recognized broader CEC threats to Washingtonians and the state’s environment with passage of the Pollution Prevention for Our Future Act, Substitute Senate Bill 5135 (Toxic Pollution), Laws of 2019.

The impact of older, legacy toxic chemicals, such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) on Southern Resident orcas and the Puget Sound food web is well documented, and WDFW has a long history of tracking these chemicals. The risk to Southern Resident orcas related to CECs accumulating in their prey is suspected to be a concern because the limited CEC information indicates the health of their prey impacted. Although WDFW currently monitors a number of legacy toxic chemicals in salmon and other Puget Sound species, the Department lacks funding to identify and track newer CECs, including pharmaceuticals, (e.g., antibiotics, opioids, antidepressants), estrogenic chemicals (including estrogen-mimicking substances from plastics), per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS, in consumer products and fire-fighting foams), a recently identified chemical from vehicle tires causing pre-spawn mortality in coho salmon (6PPD-quinone), and other priority chemicals identified in SSB-5135. Puget Sound Chinook salmon, which the ESA lists as threatened and a preferred prey of Southern Resident orcas, are at particular risk of exposure to toxic contaminants as juveniles in their natal streams and rivers, and as adults feeding in Puget Sound. The limited CEC data that is available indicates that several CECs, especially pharmaceuticals, are likely harming juvenile Chinook salmon but the locations most impacted and sources are not well understood. Southern Resident orcas sometimes eat coho salmon and steelhead trout, species scientists know the exposure to 6PPD-quinone harms. However, the extent to which this CEC is accumulating in the orca and salmon food web is unknown.

Proposed Solution

WDFW is seeking funds to expand its existing monitoring program of legacy contaminants in the orca and salmon food web to include analyses for the presence of CECs to better support orca and salmon recovery. These CEC data will allow the Department to identify which chemicals are of greatest concern to threatened Southern Resident orcas, Chinook salmon and other important species, and whether the chemicals are increasing or decreasing in the environment. These are recommendations of the Governor’s Orca Task Force and high priority objectives for the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program’s Toxic Workgroup, the Puget Sound Partnership’s Science Panel, and others.

Adding CECs to WDFW’s existing program of monitoring legacy toxics is a cost-effective solution that would allow the Department to help prioritize remedial actions to reduce their harm. This solution leverages WDFW’s existing long-term toxics monitoring program by adding funds to analyze new toxic chemicals in tissue samples already planned for collection by WDFW’s Toxics Biological Observation System (TBIOS), including plankton, mussels, herring, English sole, and Chinook salmon. Moreover, it would dovetail with Ecology’s Environmental Assessment Program and SSB-5135 to ensure Ecology have the data it needs to more effectively reduce CECs posing the greatest risk to these aquatic

species, as well as the freshwater species Ecology may monitor for CECs. WDFW and Ecology staff are currently working to prioritize CECs of greatest concern through the PSEMP Toxics Work Group with university researchers and other regulatory agencies in the region (e.g., US Environmental Protection Program, King County, etc.) and the information from WDFW's proposed CEC tracking study will bolster that effort. Ultimately, this information will aid efforts to reduce the threat CECs pose to the health of the Puget Sound food web.

Best Option

The primary consequence of not funding this proposal is that staff will have little information to guide them on how best to spend limited funds to reduce CEC inputs to Puget Sound to protect and restore the health of Chinook salmon and Southern Resident orcas. This monitoring proposal is the best option because it would focus limited remediation funds on (a) the CECs most likely to cause harm, (b) where in the ecosystem the harm is occurring, and (c) which species are most impacted. This avoids unnecessary spending on less problematic CECs in areas where they may not occur. Moreover, adding CEC analyses to WDFW existing monitoring program legacy contaminants is cost effective. No new funds are needed to collect and process additional samples of important species in the orca and salmon food web as WDFW is already collecting them.

Options to reduce the proposed expenses include reducing the number of indicator species, reducing spatial coverage, and reducing the number of chemicals analyzed. Each of these options is possible, however implementing any one reduction will result in an incomplete effort to protect Chinook salmon and Southern Resident orcas. The Department has considered cheaper approaches to analyzing for CECs in tissues, which is costly, at more than \$3,000 per sample. For example, TBIOS scientists are currently working with colleagues from the Puget Sound Partnership, Ecology, NOAA Fisheries, Western Washington University, and others to narrow down a targeted list of CECs likely to cause harm, based on known or predicted toxicity and likely exposure of organisms.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This proposal expands the scope of the Fish Program's base budget for its 32-year TBiOS Toxics Monitoring Program. The base budget has been funded in the last two biennia via a direct appropriation to the Department from the Model Toxics Control Operating Account (Fund 23P). Total biennial allotments for the base program were \$1,908,800 in 2019-21 and \$1,926,100 in 2021-23.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and Benefits, objects A and B, for 4.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions total \$492,000 in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing. Goods and Services, object E, include \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year, as well as central agency costs. Object E also includes \$3,000/year for lab supplies not covered by the standard employee costs, such as glassware, jars, etc.

Personal Service Contracts, object C, totals \$380,000 in FY 2024 and ongoing for lab contracts to perform tissue analyses. Chemical analysis of tissues currently costs approximately \$3,000 per sample. This expense could increase or decrease depending on the number and type of chemicals discovered in tissues as the program develops, and on changes in analytical methodologies by contract labs. Travel Costs, object G, total \$1,000 in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing for annual field work, meetings and conferences. An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classification and the associated work for 4.5 FTE are as follows:

1.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Research Scientist 1 (RS1) to direct field activities, analyze data, write reports and communicate results to remediation practitioners.

0.5 FTE Biologist 3 to assist the Research Scientist 1 with data analysis and writing.

0.5 FTE Scientific Technician 2 to process and track CEC tissue samples.

0.5 FTE IT Data Management - Entry to design, manage and curate the large volume of complex data this project will generate, and link it to the existing TBiOS contaminant database.

1.0 FTE Communication Consultant 3 within the Director's Office, Communications and Public Engagement to focus on broadening public awareness of toxic chemicals and their impact on fish and wildlife. Several strategies will be utilized, such as having this position plan and implement strategic communications techniques to advance consumers' preferences for household products that are safer for the environment, in particular, to minimize impacts to Southern Resident orcas and Chinook.

1.0 FTE Washington Management Service, Band 2, is the policy lead and will be responsible for the following:

- Connect science from all CEC monitoring and research described in this decision package and existing WDFW toxics monitoring with WDFW and ECY Policy to inform management decisions for Puget Sound recovery;
- Coordinate contaminant remediation efforts to ensure recovery of Chinook salmon;
- Coordinate WDFW's research/monitoring on tire-related chemicals (e.g., 6PPDEquinone) and coho pre-spawn mortality with Ecology's tire-related chemical remediation plans;
- Track contaminants in the SRKW food web to evaluate effectiveness of remediation efforts to recover SRKW; and
- Facilitate/ensure inclusion of diversity/equity/inclusion issues in WDFW's toxics monitoring programs.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This proposal supports the state's ability to achieve the Governor's Results Washington goals:

1. **World Class Education.** The CEC monitoring described in this proposal dovetails with WDFW's ongoing, 32-year TBiOS monitoring program. This program regularly invites students, community-science volunteers, and interns to participate in field and laboratory activities, giving them a first-hand look at how applied science is conducted to make a real difference in achieving important societal goals. TBiOS also partners with higher education institutions to not only benefit from the important input students may have on TBiOS research, but to also foster creating new, high-caliber scientists who can lean into the environmental challenges facing Washingtonians.
2. **Prosperous Economy.** Supporting remedial actions to reduce harmful CECs will contribute to a prosperous economy by protecting and recovering the natural productivity of the Puget Sound ecosystem.
3. **Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment.** All of the activities in this proposal are specifically focused on reducing toxic contaminants in the Puget Sound ecosystem.
4. **Health and Safe Communities.** Reducing CECs in the Puget Sound ecosystem contributes to physically and mentally healthier communities. Moreover, embedding the diversity, equity, and inclusion values described above will contribute to more equitable access to healthful resources.
5. **Efficient, Effective and Accountable Government.** This proposal illustrates efficient, effective and accountable government because it leverages an existing monitoring program to minimize expenses and take advantage of the broad and deep communication network WDFW has developed with sister agencies and other partners in Puget Sound recovery.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This package supports the Department's strategy to proactively address conservation challenges and expanding current species recovery efforts.

This package relates directly to WDFW's objective of achieving healthy and sustainable fish and wildlife populations, and its vision of abundant opportunities for diverse populations to use Puget Sound's living aquatic resources. Connecting the occurrence of CECs with remedial actions for Puget Sound recovery will engender environmental responsibility and personal stewardship, as Washingtonians see the practical results of actions taken to reduce CECs in the environment.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Preserve & Restore Aquatic Habitats and Species, 3.5 FTE and \$1,070,000 per fiscal year, Model Toxics Control Operating Account, Fund 23P.

Aquatic habitats will contribute to a robust ecosystem that supports fish and wildlife in Washington. These healthy habitats will contribute to resiliency, strong species diversity, and abundant opportunities for fishing and non-consumptive outdoor recreation. Those fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities will contribute to economic health in rural communities reliant on outdoor recreation.

Business Management & Obligations, 1.0 FTE and \$136,000 per fiscal year, Model Toxics Control Operating Account, Fund 23P.

WDFW's director, deputy director and policy director work together to lead a small team of staff through agency leadership and strategy development to address the environmental concerns of the state while working within the challenging sociopolitical climate that comes along with natural resource work. This includes agency-wide strategic planning, lean process improvement and conflict transformation work. The Director's Office's Communications and Public Engagement staff develop a cohesive approach for how the Department engages and communicates with the public and integrates social science into the Department's fish and wildlife mission. The position's duties directly contribute to WDFW's 25-Year Strategic Plan strategy to "Engage communicates through recreation and stewardship" by providing communications to the public about how their consumer choices impact toxic chemicals in the environment and to promote environmentally friendly options.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Meeting priority research needs
- Helping to advance increases to threatened and endangered species population

The primary performance outcomes of this effort will be threefold. In the short term, TBIOS will create a list of CECs of highest priority for implementing source control, cleanup, or other remediation efforts to protect the health of Chinook salmon and Southern Resident orcas. This list will include specific locations in Puget Sound where, and in which species, the greatest harm is occurring. This will augment PSEMP CEC prioritization efforts underway in the region and inform Ecology's existing growing list of CECs related to protecting human health (from SSB-5135), thereby providing a more comprehensive approach to CEC reduction aimed at protecting both humans and aquatic life.

In the mid-term, the Department will supply information from this monitoring to the Puget Sound Partnership's Stormwater Strategic Initiative process to evaluate how best to respond to problematic CECs. Whereas incremental performance metrics may include the number of CECs identified, the magnitude of CEC exposure in indicator species, and locations where CEC problems occur, one of the most important performance measures from this funding will be more informed design making regarding CECs.

In the long-term, successful performance will reduce CECs sufficiently in the species TBIOS monitors to improve their health and productivity. This would include reducing CEC levels in juvenile Chinook salmon sufficiently to recover their health and survivability, as well as reducing CEC levels in adult Chinook salmon and other species in the Southern resident orca food web to recover and protect orca health.

The ultimate outcome of this proposal is to generate information to fill a known data gap related to the recovery of ESA-listed Southern Resident orcas and Puget Sound Chinook salmon. The Department designed this proposal to fill a specific CEC-related data gap identified in the governor's [Saving the Southern Resident Orca](#) policy brief (January 2019). This policy brief called out the need for science and monitoring of toxic contaminants to measure progress and improve recovery efforts directed towards threatened Chinook salmon. This information is critical to successful implementation of strategies to reduce contaminant-related risks to these species and accelerate their recovery. WDFW expects the work described in this proposal will be conducted concurrently with the strategies designed to improve stormwater and wastewater management in Puget Sound outlined in the [2021 Governor's Salmon Strategy Update](#), as well as the other strategies in that document aimed at correcting fish passage barriers, building climate resiliency, and aligning hydropower, hatchery and habitat with salmon recovery, among others. Successful performance of this proposal addresses WDFW's Approved Performance Measure 001539; "Threatened and endangered species population increases".

This proposal leverages WDFW's existing TBIOS monitoring program and avoids the cost of beginning a new field-sampling program to collect organisms and tissue samples for CECs. All sampling costs related to the planning and execution of field surveys to collect samples and lab processing to prepare samples for analysis are already covered by TBIOS. This proposal seeks funds solely to analyze tissue samples generated from this existing work, and staff time for managing and analyzing the resulting CEC data, writing reports, managing data, and communicating results to remediation practitioners.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

WDFW has already received strong support from treaty and non-treaty tribes in Puget Sound related to its TBIOS program, and several have expressed keen interest in the CEC work described in this proposal. This proposal is the result of identifying serious threats to the salmon and orcas that tribal governments depend on for their culture, economy, and safety.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

The primary goal of this proposal is to identify where CEC contamination is occurring and how severe it may be. We expect to find inequitable (greater) impacts of these contaminants on specific demographic groups (Tribes, Asian and Pacific Islander communities, and other people of color). This inequity can only be addressed after CECs are identified in the ecosystem.

Until CEC remediation is completed to protect impacted communities, access restriction to areas where WDFW has identified toxics in the marine food web would be essential to prevent consumption. This could result in a decrease in economic activity for businesses/economies who rely on the traffic and activity from fishing.

By making an investment now to identify and research the impacts of the CECs on Chinook and orca in the Puget Sound, the state is able to gather data to help identify areas of pollution, to inform decision makers of options to respond to the pollution and begin to have the conversations of remediating that pollution.

Depending on future remediation plans chosen, the positive impacts of reducing CECs in the ecosystem will be most tangible to people living near CEC-polluted areas, as they see their environment improving. Remediation plans may also impact industries or activities related to the production, use, and management of CECs, including chemical industries who may be required to develop safer products, wastewater treatment facilities who may need to alter treatment plans to remove CECs from human sewage, agriculture operations who may need to alter the application of pharmaceuticals or pesticides and treat contaminated runoff, and stormwater permittees and managers who may be developing best management practices to reduce contamination of the stormwater for which they are responsible. Mitigation efforts could include DOH emphasizing consumption of seafood from uncontaminated areas or species with lower/safer levels of CECs, or WDFW emphasizing non-consumptive recreational fishing and boating, which would necessitate proper enforcement to ensure compliance.

Target Populations or Communities:

It is well documented that systemically marginalized communities in the Puget Sound basin, including tribal, Asian, Pacific Islander, and other people of color, are disproportionately affected by toxic contaminants in the environment. Contamination is especially problematic in communities who rely on seafood for subsistence or on Puget Sound's living resources for cultural practices. These impacted communities would benefit from the primary outcomes of this work – identifying where CECs occur -- so remedial actions can be taken to protect their health and restore traditional cultural practices.

This is a key element of the large group of efforts aimed at restoring the health of the Puget Sound ecosystem, which provides benefits to all Washingtonians. Toxic chemical contaminants are reducing the abundance of adult [Chinook salmon](#), thus impacting the food supply available to [Southern Resident](#) orcas, as well as decreasing recreational, commercial, tribal ceremonial and subsistence fishing opportunities.

In the long run, successful remediation based on the foundation of this work will expand availability and accessibility of living marine resources, as contamination is reduced, and contaminant-related fishery restrictions are prevented or lifted. This program will seek out culturally specific strategies to ensure the needs of impacted communities are included in the monitoring plan.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

By increasing capacity at WDFW to identify the location and sources of Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CEC) exposure in order to guide conservation measures to reduce toxic chemicals in Puget Sound, this decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 8 Toxic Chemical Pollution and is directly aligned with Action (ID #43) Prioritize, prevent, and manage (regulations, permits, and incentives) chemicals of emerging concern by implementing key opportunity Identify, prioritize, and monitor chemicals of emerging concern (CECs) (including integration of human health risk and thresholds). This package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C Research and Monitoring and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#121) Direct and leverage funding and investments to advance science, monitoring, and adaptive management for Puget Sound recovery. This decision package implements the priority action 8 Assess toxic

contaminant sources, (both historic and ongoing) and prioritize their clean-up or replacement based on environmental and human health impacts from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 33, Increase monitoring of toxic substances in marine water and create and deploy adaptive management strategies to reduce threats to orcas and their prey. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy 6 Address predatory and food web issues for salmon.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

This package will benefit from support from a WDFW's pre-existing TBiOS network of tribes, city and county governments, other state agencies (Dept. of Health, Dept. of Ecology, the Puget Sound Partnership), and federal agencies (USEPA, NOAA Fisheries, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the US Geological Survey). WDFW's TBiOS base toxics monitoring program has already established close working relationships with these entities over the last 32 years, to engender mutual support for common goals related to contaminant reductions in the Puget Sound ecosystem. WDFW has already experienced strong support from a number of tribes in Puget Sound related to its TBiOS program, and several have expressed keen interest in the CEC work described in this proposal. The CEC monitoring activities and goals in this proposal would be rolled into WDFW's existing TBiOS contaminant monitoring program to leverage these relationships towards achieving the goals described herein.

The Department anticipates potential impacts to two state agencies. CEC contamination data from this proposal will be delivered to the Department of Health (DOH). WDFW expects DOH will respond by evaluating whether a human-health risk assessment is warranted by the TBiOS CEC data, and possibly conducting the assessment. DOH staff are aware of and are anticipating this possibility. In addition, this project will likely identify CECs not yet on Ecology's SSB-5135 CEC list, likely prompting the need for a response from that agency. WDFW will communicate in a timely manner with Ecology staff to ensure they are aware of the development of such data.

Stakeholder Response:

WDFW regularly interacts with a large number of non-governmental organizations to conduct field work related to its base contaminant monitoring program, including Bainbridge Beach Naturalists, Fiero Marine Life Center, Harbor WildWatch, Port Townsend Marine Science Center, Sound Water Stewards, Puget Soundkeeper Alliance, Seattle Aquarium, South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement, Friends of Skagit Beaches, Vashon Nature Center, and Friends of Burley Lagoon. In addition, TBiOS collaborates and communicates with environmental organizations specializing in contaminant issues, including Toxic Free Future and Zero Waste Washington. These NGOs will almost certainly strongly support this CEC proposal.

Long Live the Kings (LLTKs), a public 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to restoring wild salmon and steelhead to the waters of the Pacific Northwest, is also likely to strongly support this CEC proposal. As one of the organizations that managed the Salish Sea Marine Survival Project, LLTKs supported WDFW's existing contaminant monitoring and research program which led the contaminants aspect of the Marine Survival Project research. WDFW documented that legacy contaminants were affecting fish health and limiting Chinook salmon recovery in urban rivers. Furthermore, the Marine Survival Project's synthesis report recommended including CECs in WDFW's future monitoring and expanding the geographic scope of contaminant monitoring in Puget Sound. including CECs in WDFW's future monitoring and expanding the geographic scope of contaminant monitoring in Puget Sound.

It is possible some stakeholders will object to monitoring CECs in Puget Sound if they perceive the possibility of being identified as a potential responsible party for CEC contamination. Washington State's Attorney General's Office have used WDFW's TBiOS toxics data in the past to litigate against such parties to recover cost associated with the types of contamination WDFW might observe with this proposal.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

Identifying and tracking Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CECs) in Puget Sound's aquatic life was recommended as a high priority intervention for Southern Resident orca recovery by Governor Inslee's Orca Task Force (Recommendation 33), but this activity was not funded. In addition, this proposal supports Department of Ecology's CEC efforts related to the Pollution Prevention for Our Future Act (SSB-5135) in May 2019. Additionally, the Puget Sound Partnership's 2022 Action Agenda holds statutory goals for Puget Sound recovery with a broad range of bold and ambitious recovery targets. For the toxic contaminants already monitored by TBIOS in Puget Sound, these targets are: "By 2030, 95 percent of the samples gathered across Puget Sound habitats exhibit a declining trend of contaminant levels, or are below thresholds of concern for species or human health. By 2050, 95 percent of the samples gathered across Puget Sound habitats exhibit monitored contaminant levels below thresholds of concern for species or human health and show no increasing trends." Although these targets currently focus on primarily legacy contaminants, CECs will be incorporated into these targets as they are identified in this proposal. In addition, the Puget Sound Partnership's Science Panel identified in its recent science work plan Priority Science to Support Puget Sound Recovery assessing sources and impacts of CECs as a high priority Best Management Practice to support articulated policy issues including recovery of Southern Resident orcas Chinook salmon.

Reference Documents

[EM IT Addendum with FW.docx](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

Yes

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$358	\$358	\$716	\$358	\$358	\$716
Obj. B	\$134	\$134	\$268	\$134	\$134	\$268
Obj. C	\$380	\$380	\$760	\$380	\$380	\$760
Obj. E	\$30	\$30	\$60	\$30	\$30	\$60
Obj. G	\$1	\$1	\$2	\$1	\$1	\$2
Obj. T	\$303	\$303	\$606	\$303	\$303	\$606

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

In 2014, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) deployed the online Aquatic Protection Permitting System (APPS) to manage Hydraulic Project Approvals (HPAs). The software platform, built and maintained by a vendor, shows signs of non-functionality. The outdated system prevents HPA business process improvements, and recent systemic maintenance problems jeopardize the issuance of permits within the statutory 45-day timeline. If not replaced soon, there is a continual risk of complete collapse of the statewide system used by permit applicants, agency staff, and other interested parties pursuant to RCW 77.55.351. This request is to complete a past feasibility analysis and build a new system to efficiently manage HPAs. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$2,334	\$5,004	\$7,338	\$998	\$998	\$1,996
Total Expenditures	\$2,334	\$5,004	\$7,338	\$998	\$998	\$1,996

Decision Package Description

WDFW is responsible for the management and protection of the Washington State’s fish and wildlife resources. The Habitat Program protects the habitat necessary to support fish and wildlife and issues Hydraulic Project Approvals (HPAs) for construction projects or other work in, or near, state waters (RCW 77.55). RCW 77.55.351 requires WDFW to make HPA applications accessible to local governments, affected tribes and other interested parties.

The current online HPA platform, Aquatic Protection Permitting System (APPS), deployed in 2014, is managed by a third-party vendor and was an off the shelf product the vendor customized/modified to fit WDFW needs. WDFW relies on this third-party vendor for on-going maintenance of the system and to make any enhancements to the system to accommodate and implement changes to the hydraulic code. This contractual relationship has always placed limitations on WDFW’s ability to continuously streamline their application process because of system limitations. Within the last few years, APPS has shown signs of non-functionality suggesting it is becoming a legacy software platform. There have been increasing maintenance problems that are systemic, some of which jeopardize issuance of permits within the statutory 45-day timeline or delay application submittal for the public, making the permit application process feel more burdensome to the applicant. As a result, the cost to maintain the system continues to increase. APPS also lacks functionality the program requires to continue extending functionality to internal and external users. As an example, in 2019, WDFW was given Civil Administrative Enforcement Authority to enforce the hydraulic code (RCW 77.55). APPS doesn’t have the features necessary to accommodate the new compliance inspector’s workflows, business practices and recordkeeping.

WDFW sees an immediate need to research alternative software platforms and update the existing HPA software and database. WDFW has contracted with ISG to produce a feasibility study that will evaluate opportunities to deploy a new, modern technology solution that will allow the agency to (1) improve durability, resilience, and ability to scale and adapt over time to changing requirements (2) support relatively specific legal requirements in RCW and WAC (3) configure workflows and business practices to consistently drive best practices and policy choices currently embedded in daily operation.

The desire is that the new system will include the functionality of the current APPS system, with expanded reporting and workflow capabilities that will improve users experience for customers, agency and third-party reviewers. Some of these improvement goals include the following:

- Improve customer survey feedback from the applicant by (a) reformatting and making the application website more user friendly, and (b) increasing transparency and making more data readily available to the public.
- Reduce the workload of the Department by reducing administrative and technical review time by resulting in greater operational efficiency.
- Reduce incomplete permit application submissions.
- Improve permit application data gathering and retrieval process.

The feasibility study will allow WDFW to assess and compare the different implementation options to evaluate viability as a replacement for the current system and estimate funding requirements. The feasibility study will be done by December 2022 and then circulated to OCIO, OFM,

and legislative staff. WDFW plans to update the costs associated with this request in Fall (October/November).

WDFW requests immediate funding to continue with procurement and implementation of the necessary replacement system to resolve the concerns described above. WDFW is in the process of hiring project management capacity to oversee implementation of the preferred replacement system immediately following the conclusion of the feasibility study. If this package is successful, WDFW will also supplement project management expertise with a contractor, if necessary.

If WDFW continues to rely on APPS without planning for replacement, WDFW is at risk of (and is already experiencing) the following:

- increased maintenance cost (by third-party vendor)
- increased workload to oversee management of the system, resulting in the agency needing to allocate (request) more funds to increase staff capacity
- permits issued not in compliance with RCW 77.55 (outside of statutory timeline required to process applications)
- increased time for a customer to submit their permit application, making the permit process feel more burdensome and not streamlined
- limited transparency and sharing of HPA data with the public
- security risks

The limitations of the off-the shelf product require WDFW to build and maintain additional systems that are managed outside of APPS to streamline business needs and modernize customer experience (e.g., Web APP of HPAs Issued). In addition, it doesn't accommodate growing business needs or allow flexibility to adapt the system as regulations are changed (e.g., HPA Compliance, Habitat Recovery Pilot Program). This results in an inefficient business process and a limitation on how effective the Department can be at protecting fish and wildlife through regulation because staff spend more time on administrative and technical review.

Unfortunately, there are limited improvements the third-party vendor could make to the legacy software to prevent ongoing and foreseeable maintenance and security issues. The vendor has been forthcoming with WDFW that this is a natural cycle of software as software begins to age. WDFW has invested in several enhancement projects to attempt to streamline and improve APPS (the last project deployed June 2021). While the enhancements attempt to improve user experience, the system is limited in addressing all desired updates (e.g., mobile friendly, geospatial), and each enhancement deployment seems to contribute to the overall decreasing stability of the system.

WDFW and the public are currently limited to accessing HPA data based on the search criteria that exist in the system. WDFW is reliant on paying the third-party vendor to write queries to pull and analyze HPA data outside of these limited search criteria and this option is not available to the public. If the system is not replaced, this will be an ongoing challenge and limit HPA program improvement.

WDFW recognizes the hydraulic code has unique statutory requirements and how important and informative HPA data is to a variety of public groups. WDFW is proposing the approach of first conducting a feasibility study to help synthesize system requirements and evaluate proposed alternatives for these reasons. WDFW is not in a place to delay replacing the system and so WDFW is also requesting the funds now to continue with procurement and implementation of the necessary replacement system.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

N/A

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, for two full-time equivalent (FTE) positions totals \$236,000 ongoing. Goods and services, object E, includes \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year. An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

The below estimates are projected costs based on previous replacement WDFW legacy software applications. The results of the feasibility study will help inform WDFW of the actual cost.

Replacement APPS

- Feasibility study (contracted with ISG July 2022-Dec. 2022) \$188,175
- Replacement Software development and deployment \$5,000,000 (biennium 2023-25)
- Ongoing maintenance of new software \$1,000,000 (biennial)

Workforce Assumptions:

Workforce assumptions

1.0 FTE Management Analyst 3 - The Management Analyst 3 position serves as the project management lead for the HPA replacement project and will be responsible for overseeing project implementation and maintenance.

1.0 FTE IT APP Developer-Journey - The IT APP Developer-Journey serves as the IT technical lead and is responsible for maintenance and ongoing oversight of the new application.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

Goal 5: Efficient, Effective, and Accountable Government

- Engaging and considering all system users when developing criteria for the new software system.

Goal 3: Sustainable Energy and Clean Environment

- The permitting system supports the State's ability to protect habitat.

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This package supports the goal of "Proactively Address Conservation Challenges" in WDFW's 25-Year Strategic Plan.

WDFW Activity Inventory

Preserve & Restore Aquatic Habitat & Species:

- A.1 (3.1)- Protect Fish and their habitat from the effects of construction projects
- A.10 (3.10)- Enforce protection of aquatic habitats

Business Management & Obligations:

- X.2- Communicate agency matters with the public and legislature
- X.5- Manage Information Technology

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department’s ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- HPAs processed within timelines
- HPA customer satisfaction
- HPA compliance

RCW 77.55.351 requires WDFW to make HPA applications accessible to local governments, affected tribes, and other interested parties. Replacement of the current legacy online permitting system will enable WDFW to fulfill its statutory requirements, allow WDFW staff to issue permits within the required 45-day window, and improve the applicant experience. An improved permitting system will also allow for more streamlined access to publicly available information.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

The current HPA Permitting System was not originally built to be accessible by people who use IT accessibility devices/software such as screen readers. Funding this proposal will allow the Department to meet OCIO Policy 188, requiring that IT acquisitions (including websites and applications) are accessible to people with disabilities. It is expected that this package will not further negatively impact any specific communities.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

All landowners will benefit from an updated HPA application system. The people of Washington State will also benefit through an improved search feature in the HPA system, allowing them better access to search for HPA permit applications.

Target Populations or Communities:

As part of the development of a new application, stakeholders will be asked for input on the use of the system. We expect that systemically marginalized communities, such as people with limited English proficiency and people with disabilities, will be asked for input on the new system.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 3 Healthy Shorelines and is directly aligned with Action (ID #14), increase and improve shoreline regulation implementation, compliance, enforcement, and, communication by implementing key opportunities 1) evaluate and improve implementation of existing shoreline regulations and policies (which could include single-family residences as well as emergency construction permits) and 2) conduct effective and active compliance monitoring and enforcement to support and reinforce permitting decisions by state and local regulatory agencies, by ensuring that the public facing HPA permitting online system required for shoreline modification is functional, efficient, and aids in future compliance of shoreline regulations that support functioning shoreline habitat, species, and food webs.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23: Good Governance by increasing transparency of decision-making processes related to shoreline regulations specific to HPA permitting by ensuring a clear and transparent online system for the public, tribes, and other communities. This decision package is indirectly aligned with the Action (ID#163), increase trust by including and communicating directly and effectively with new and diverse audiences by ensuring that a public facing online permitting system that is the pathway for decision making at the state agency level is clear, transparent, and functional to increase trust and communication with the diverse partners.

This decision package is necessary to support the ongoing Hydraulic Approval Program which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies: 3-Healthy Shorelines, 4-Riparian Areas, 5-Floodplains and Estuaries, 6-Fish Passage Barriers, 7-Sumerged Aquatic Vegetation, 22-Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria: Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by ensuring the integrity of the HPA online permitting system, where data is ultimately collected about HPA permits in Puget Sound, is functional and can be used for future regulatory and compliance reviews across the region. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Task Force recommendation 3: Apply and enforce laws that protect habitat, by enhancing state agencies’ capacity for implementation and enforcement of the state Hydraulic Code and fish passage regulations by ensuring a functional HPA online permitting system for staff and partners. This decision

package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 1: Protect and restore vital salmon habitat by ensuring a functional online permitting system for HPAs that are often required in shoreline construction projects that may support restoration projects for vital salmon habitat.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

Replacement of the existing HPA permit application and database will improve local government, and other state agency experience (as a customer and third-party reviewer). Not replacing the system could result in decreased satisfaction in HPA application review (delayed time), continued frustrations with existing search functionality, and potential failure to produce records in response to the Public Records Act should the system be compromised through a cyber security incident or catastrophic technical issue. WDFW plans on engaging these groups when gathering requirements prior to development of a new system to better understand what is currently working well and what is currently not working well.

Stakeholder Response:

Replacement of the existing HPA permit software and database will improve stakeholder experience (as a customer and third-party reviewer). Not replacing the system could result in decreased satisfaction in HPA application process (delayed time), and continued frustrations with existing search functionality. WDFW plans on engaging these groups when gathering requirements prior to development of a new system to better understand what is currently working well and what is currently not working well.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

RCW 77.55.351 - The department shall develop a system to provide local governments, affected tribes, and other interested parties with access to hydraulic project approval applications.

Reference Documents

[HPA IT addendum \(1\).docx](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

Yes

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$174	\$174	\$348	\$174	\$174	\$348
Obj. B	\$62	\$62	\$124	\$62	\$62	\$124
Obj. C	\$1,500	\$3,500	\$5,000	\$500	\$500	\$1,000
Obj. E	\$12	\$12	\$24	\$12	\$12	\$24
Obj. T	\$586	\$1,256	\$1,842	\$250	\$250	\$500

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Agency Recommendation Summary

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) requests funding for feasibility and market research analysis to begin replacing outdated systems. The results of the analysis will be used to determine the legacy systems to be replaced in future budget requests. Legacy systems are difficult and costly to maintain, vulnerable to cybersecurity attacks, and put the Department at risk of service disruption. Replacing obsolete systems will improve the quality and efficiency of applications, enhance cybersecurity, reduce risk, and will allow the Department to respond to evolving business needs. This will allow WDFW to lifecycle its custom-built solutions to modernize how WDFW conducts its business and further enable the Department’s digital transformation through phased improvements to first generation-technical solutions. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$714	\$714	\$1,428	\$714	\$714	\$1,428
Total Expenditures	\$714	\$714	\$1,428	\$714	\$714	\$1,428

Decision Package Description

The Department is responsible for the management and protection of Washington State’s fish, wildlife, and habitat resources. WDFW’s customers include Washington residents as well as complex co-management relationships with sovereign tribal entities, Idaho, Oregon, and Canada which results in a constant evolution of rulemaking practices for in-season monitoring and decision making. The technology solutions used to serve our customers over the last couple of decades are crucial for ensuring we can uphold our obligation to manage those resources for access by the public, local municipalities, tribal co-managers, and commercial entities. To continue providing the best available science to determine policy and rulemaking for recreational, commercial interests, and the conservation of state resources, our technological infrastructure must be maintained. Having modern technology solutions available to our staff and the public is essential to our relationship with co-managers, stakeholders, the public, and the governmental and non-governmental entities with whom we collaborate.

Like many businesses and government agencies, we are faced with continued growing demand for IT Services. As funding and resources for technology solutions become available, they are quickly prioritized to the new or emergent needs. Unfortunately, this leaves our legacy technology solutions with insufficient funding. Our limited investment in maintaining and modernizing our legacy systems puts Washington residents at risk of service disruptions, data breaches, poor customer experiences (front-facing applications), and costly maintenance. To minimize the resources needed to support these legacy systems, WDFW intends to acquire and implement modern technology solutions so staff can be trained in a common toolset for familiarity and shared workload. Taking advantage of modern technology solutions will help ensure secure and responsibly governed data and data solutions and increased accessibility and efficiency of our online solutions for the public, staff, and partners.

Problem statement

WDFW carries a portfolio of legacy systems which were custom built over the last several decades by staff who are no longer with the Department, often written in obsolete code that is no longer supported or available through recruitment. In the current technology landscape, these systems are not only vulnerable for exploitation by cyber criminals but are targets for increasingly sophisticated automated attacks. Our vulnerabilities put Washington resident’s data and the entire state enterprise at risk. We are now stuck in a cycle where these old systems are taking significantly more staff resources to support than more modern solutions.

Opportunity/Solution Statement

In this request for legacy system replacement, WDFW intends to complete a third-party feasibility study on each legacy system to inform us about the best approach to replacing each legacy solution in our portfolio. In addition to the funding for doing feasibility studies, WDFW is requesting staffing resources to conduct business analysis to gather requirements for current needs and enhancement ideas from subject matter experts for engagement with internal and external stakeholders. We are also requesting resources to manage these projects, author project management documentation, and review requirements of existing technology solutions with our business partners.

WDFW is requesting the following permanent positions:

- 1 FTE – IT Business Analyst – Journey
- 1 FTE – IT Project Manager – Journey

We believe that these staffing resources are necessary to ensure the success of the feasibility study. These staff will ensure there is sufficient capacity to work with vendors and the business partners in gathering requirements, reverse engineering solutions, creating, managing project artifacts, and managing customer expectations. WDFW must also have sufficient staffing to mitigate organizational change management that always accompanies technological change. Both positions will be permanent positions. WDFW intends to lifecycle its entire portfolio of 52 applications. These positions would be dedicated to the next series of solutions for continuous software development lifecycle management, to maximize our cybersecurity posture, manage our information governance, implement data management practices, and maintain modern digital solutions for generations of WDFW stakeholders.

Examples of potential applications WDFW could replace (dependent on approval of funding via future budget requests)

Legacy Application Replacement Target #1: SCoRE Summary

This Salmon Conservation Reporting Engine (SCoRE) website provides up-to-date information on salmon populations and provides context for the efforts WDFW and its partners are taking in the arenas of habitat, hatcheries, and harvest to protect and conserve salmon and steelhead in Washington. SCoRE consolidates and summarizes data and information that represents the Department's contribution to salmon conservation and salmon recovery. The current version of SCoRE is the first phase of a multi-phase project that will be improved upon over time. SCoRE is organized around six key areas of salmon recovery:

- Salmon Species and Populations
- Salmon Conservation: Recovery and Restoration
- Hatcheries
- Harvest
- Habitat
- Governor's Performance Measures

SCoRE is built in Java and hosted on on-premise architecture. The public accesses SCoRE via a public facing website that is separate from WDFW's public website. Having to navigate to separate websites makes finding information unnecessarily complex. This issue cannot be addressed without a complete rewrite of the application, as it was built over a decade ago and is now considered a legacy system. Additionally, this system has suffered cyber security vulnerabilities that have been mitigated but not fully remedied (due to the outdated technology associated with this application).

Legacy Application Replacement Target #2: LIFT

The primary purpose of the Licensing and Fish Ticket (LIFT) application is to manage commercial licensing in the Department. The application is built in PowerBuilder and is hard to support, hard to update or modify, and is very disjointed. Due to the antiquated technology, WDFW is unable to provide users with online resources to purchase licenses or review their information online. The lack of online functionality forces commercial licensees to travel to a WDFW office to interact with staff and manage their commercial license. In addition, there is no interface for payments. Currently the licensing staff use a separate payment system, then hand enter the payment information into the LIFT system.

The lack of customer support and service, the convoluted manual processes WDFW is forced to conduct, the lack of institutional knowledge to support the antiquated code base, threatens the ability of WDFW to serve licensed commercial fishers and puts the Department at severe risk.

Our strategy is to engage in biennial processes of asking for funding to do feasibility and market research analysis to develop a supplemental seed funding request to replace these systems. Specifically, WDFW is requesting \$500,000 per biennium for two (2) third-party feasibility studies at \$250,000 per study. A quality evaluation, readiness assessment, and recommendation from a third-party vendor is needed before the Department can request funding to replace legacy applications in future legislative sessions.

We strongly believe that a strategy of transitioning away from custom-built solutions and moving towards vendor supported commercial/consumer off-the-shelf (COTS) solutions or, when advised by a feasibility study, build internal low-code modern tech stack solutions is in line with the strategic direction the State CIO, OCIO, OFM, and Governor's office. In addition to funding for the feasibility studies, WDFW is requesting funding for one permanent IT Project Manager (Journey) and one permanent IT Business Analyst (Journey) to gather requirements for the feasibility study, work with IT Application Development staff to reverse engineer existing system functionality, and champion

operational change management and customer engagement.

With funding from this request, WDFW intends to have a third-party vendor complete a feasibility study on the LiFT and SCoRE systems. The results will inform WDFW about the current comparable function and features of the technology marketplace for similar solutions. The partnership between the third-party consultation groups and the Business Analysis and Project Management resources hired through this request would put WDFW in a strong position to complete vendor selection through formal RFP processes or be sufficiently prepared to develop custom solutions using enterprise approved technology stacks. Replacing LiFT would enable our commercial fishing and shell fishing fleet to have the opportunity to make online payments for their licenses without having to return from the sea to do so. A modern licensing and e-commerce solution will also increase participation and compliance as well as promoting the department's customer service ethics and priorities. A modern solution would also greatly reduce the efforts necessary to pull regularly requested data and reports for our commercial licenses, which is frequently requested by both the public and internal fisheries management teams.

Replacing SCoRE will allow us to report new indicators as requested by fish management and co-managers and would greatly support data collection and monitoring aspects of the Governors Salmon Recovery initiative. The redevelopment will also allow us to leverage new data visualization tools and incorporate geospatial components to better communicate salmon conservation and recovery to the public and WDFW partners. Currently, much of the data and information within SCoRE has become out-of-date, displaying erroneous information to the public. Critically, the SCoRE system does not meet accessibility requirements mandated by the state for online tools. This puts the Department at significant legal risk in addition to not meeting customer needs for data and information. Additionally, SCoRE is not maintainable in the current state and needs to be redeveloped in alignment with skills and technology currently available at WDFW. We are finding ourselves vulnerable to cyber-attacks and unable to accommodate new technology standards and services with the application.

Current prioritization of WDFW technology resources is routinely focused on break fix, maintenance of these problematic legacy systems, or innovative new solutions that are either desperately needed by the business or directed by new rules, laws, executive orders, or emergencies. This unfortunate roulette of technical resource prioritization leaves mission critical "working" systems just outside of the resource window for taking tactical action for full system lifecycle replacement. One alternative is to maintain the status quo. This option was not chosen because it puts the Department at risk of business disruptions, failure to meet its mission and objectives, cyber-security attacks, and poor customer service.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

N/A

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Staff

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, for two full-time equivalent (FTE) positions totals \$273,000 ongoing. Goods and services, object E, includes \$6,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year. An infrastructure and program support rate of 33.50% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

Other costs

Previous feasibility studies on custom built solutions costing \$250,000 per engagement were used to estimate professional service contracts for the two (2) legacy applications we are proposing replacement.

Calculations for other costs:

\$250,000 (based upon previous studies) x two (2) studies (LiFT and SCoRE) = \$500,000 for object C

Workforce Assumptions:

Job classification and the associated work for two (2) FTEs:

1.0 FTE IT Project Manager (Journey)

The Legacy System Project Manager position will be stationed at the Natural Resources Building in Olympia and serve as the dedicated project manager throughout the lifecycle of the project. The position will assist with vendor selection for feasibility studies, authoring project artifacts and status updates to the WDFW CIO. Duties include monitoring or management of technology projects using standard project management techniques, including creating projects estimates, reporting, resource, and capacity planning.

1.0 FTE IT Business Analyst (Journey)

The Legacy System Business Analyst will be stationed in the Puget Sound region. They will work directly with the Project Manager, the IT Application Development team that currently supports the legacy systems, and the customers that use the system daily to understand the full scope, impacts and expected outcomes of the existing solutions. Duties include work that involves applying analytical processes to the planning, design, and implementation of IT systems to meet the business requirements of customer organizations. It also includes the work of translating business needs to technical requirements. These activities apply to establishing new IT systems as well as improving existing IT systems.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Governor's Results Washington Goals

This package supports the Governor's goal of "Effective, Efficient, and Accountable Government" by ensuring legacy applications are replaced with effective and efficient ones. It supports this goal by ensuring sound management of people's data. Lastly, it supports an accountable government by ensuring people's data is secure.

It also supports:

- Governor's Salmon Recovery plan
- State CIO strategic plan for legacy system replacement
- Best practices for cybersecurity and data governance
- Modern Workforce and digital transformation efforts to support a hybrid workforce

WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This package supports two strategies in WDFW's 25-Year plan: 1) Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions, and 2) Model operational and environmental excellence by ensuring systems (applications) are in place that allow the Department to efficiently collect scientific data needed to make informed decisions, manage data in a safe and secure manner, provide better customer experiences.

WDFW Activity Inventory

This package supports the Activity of "Business Management & Obligations", more specifically, "Manage Information Technology" 100% at \$714,000 and 2.0 FTEs per fiscal year. Replacing legacy applications will support this activity by:

- Decreasing risk of cyber-security threats
- Increasing positive customer experiences
- Increasing readily available access to scientific data
- Decreasing risk of future costly updates to outdated legacy systems
- Increasing business continuity by ensuring minimal system downtime

Performance Outcomes:

The outcome of this request would be a product (completed analysis, planning, and readiness) the Department will use to ensure it replaces outdated systems in the most efficient and timely manner possible. Future proposed solution success would be measured by the up time or down time of the system. The goal would be to ensure continuous up time of a new technology solution to minimize any impacts to the public, co-managers, and partners that depend on WDFW staff, data, and services.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

At this time, no disproportional impacts are expected. However, if language and disability accessibility are not built into the systems, there could be a negative impact on those with limited English proficiency and the visually impaired community. If the project planning and building incorporate Title VI and OCIO policy 188 where applicable, these impacts can be lessened.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

This funding request addresses critical concerns with the technologies that support core Department functions. Without funding, the Department's risk of failure will continue to grow.

This request is not directly connected to specific communities, however failure to address legacy systems could result in reduced services that could hinder the Department's ability to apply an equitable lens.

Target Populations or Communities:

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department maintain mission-critical technologies to ensure there is not degradation of services to the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying risks that could result in a negative impact on the Department's business operations and restrict mission critical work or advances/improvements throughout the Department.

WDFW will be reaching out to users to get feedback, gather requirements, and test new systems once the resources requested are onboarded and able to engage with a vendor on the outcomes of a feasibility study which should inform the best approach for replacing the current technical solution. New solutions will also be user tested to ensure usability, accessibility and to gauge success metrics. For example, the replacement of SCoRE will improve accessibility for all Washington residents by making data more accessible and user-friendly.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C Research and monitoring because data management underpins the success of WDFW to implement this strategy including using the SCoRE webtool that will be addressed through this decision package. This decision package provides the technological resources and frameworks for WDFW ongoing programs to be able to implement all the Action Agenda strategies that they are aligned with. Thus, it aligns with 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23 Good Governance by ensuring WDFW can work effectively and transparently to achieve our mission.

This package fulfills the secondary criteria Support continuity by ensuring that WDFW's ongoing programs, such as the Salmonid Life Histories and Survival Research program, have the technological infrastructure to maintain effectiveness and continue to support Puget Sound recovery. This decision package ensures the technological support for WDFW to implement the Salmon Strategy Recommendations 1: Protect and restore vital salmon habitat; 5: more effectively integrate salmon recovery into harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower; and 8: Strengthen science, monitoring, and accountability.

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

Updating systems to meet current security standards, along with having the ability and funding to maintain them to future security standards, is expected to be supported by OCIO. We expect Washington tribes to be generally supportive of upgraded systems to support salmon recovery efforts.

Stakeholder Response:

WDFW anticipates full public and stakeholder support. It is expected that commercial fishers will support a LiFT system that will not require them to drive to a WDFW office to conduct business. We expect the SCoRE system replacement to be supported by groups that typically support salmon recovery.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

N/A

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

Reference Documents

[LSR IT addendum.docx](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

Yes

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$205	\$205	\$410	\$205	\$205	\$410
Obj. B	\$68	\$68	\$136	\$68	\$68	\$136
Obj. C	\$250	\$250	\$500	\$250	\$250	\$500
Obj. E	\$12	\$12	\$24	\$12	\$12	\$24
Obj. T	\$179	\$179	\$358	\$179	\$179	\$358

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Supporting Details



Endangered Island Marble Butterfly on host plant, Menzies pepper-grass. Photo credit: WDFW Staff



Dollars in Thousands

ABS031 Agency DP Priority (PL)
(List only the program Policy Level budget decision packages, in priority order)
477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife
2023-25 Regular Budget Session
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Decision Package Code	Decision Package Title
PL-RB	Restoring Washington's Biodiversity
PL-CM	Critical Infrastructure Maintenance
PL-MT	Fish Passage Maintenance Team
PL-WC	Expand Wildlife Conflict Response
PL-WD	Wildlife Disease Surveillance
PL-PE	Columbia River ESA Permitting
PL-HA	Hatchery Investment Strategy
PL-EV	Engaging Volunteers in Conservation
PL-BC	Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW
PL-CN	Building a Carbon-Neutral WDFW
PL-BA	Body Cameras and Public Records
PL-EF	Emerging Fishery Implementation
PL-SL	Manage Impacts to State Lands
PL-GS	Geoduck Stock Assessment
PL-EM	Emerging Toxics in Chinook and Orca
PL-HP	HPA Permitting System Replacement
PL-LS	Legacy Systems Replacement

ABS031 Agency DP Priority (PL)
(List only the program Policy Level budget decision packages, in priority order)
477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

Dollars in Thousands

Report Number: ABS031

Input Parameters	Entered as
Session	2023-25 Regular
Agency	477
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Program	Agency Level
For Word	N
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Dollars in
Thousands

ABS 029 Summarized Revenue by Account and Source
Department of Fish and Wildlife
Agency Level
2023-25 Regular Budget Session
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal

	Maintenance Level		Policy Level		Annual Totals		Biennial Total
	FY2024	FY2025	FY2024	FY2025	FY2024	FY2025	
001 - General Fund							
0315 - Dept of Interior - F							
8F - Fuel Rate Adjustments	40	40	0	0			
8U - Utility Rate Adjustments	67	68	0	0			
RI - Reclassified IT Positions	16	16	0	0			
Total - 0315 - Dept of Interior - F	123	124	0	0	123	124	247
0549 - Misc. Local Revenue - P/L							
8F - Fuel Rate Adjustments	14	14	0	0			
8U - Utility Rate Adjustments	(14)	(14)	0	0			
RI - Reclassified IT Positions	2	3	0	0			
Total - 0549 - Misc. Local Revenue - P/L	2	3	0	0	2	3	5
001 - General Fund - Federal	123	124			123	124	247
001 - General Fund - Private/Local	2	3			2	3	5
Total - 001 - General Fund	125	127			125	127	252
110 - Spec Wildlife							
0549 - Misc. Local Revenue - P/L							
FC - Survey Flight Cost Increases	1	1	0	0			
Total - 0549 - Misc. Local Revenue - P/L	1	1	0	0	1	1	2
110 - Spec Wildlife - Private/Local	1	1			1	1	2
Total - 110 - Spec Wildlife	1	1			1	1	2
Agency: 477 DFW - Federal	123	124			123	124	247
Agency: 477 DFW - Private/Local	3	4			3	4	7
Total - Agency: 477 DFW	126	128			126	128	254
- unknown source title - Z							

8F - Fuel Rate Adjustments

ABS 029 Summarized Revenue by Account and Source
Department of Fish and Wildlife
Agency Level
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal
Dollars in Thousands

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) must travel across the state to remote locations to fulfill the Department's mission of preserving, protecting and perpetuating fish and wildlife. In fiscal year 2022 the Department experienced increased fuel costs. These cost increases impact project budgets and cannot be absorbed without compromising work. This proposal requests funding for the increased fuel costs the Department experienced in fiscal year 2022, ongoing. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

8F - Fuel Rate Adjustments

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) must travel across the state to remote locations to fulfill the Department's mission of preserving, protecting and perpetuating fish and wildlife. In fiscal year 2022 the Department experienced increased fuel costs. These cost increases impact project budgets and cannot be absorbed without compromising work. This proposal requests funding for the increased fuel costs the Department experienced in fiscal year 2022, ongoing. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

8U - Utility Rate Adjustments

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) requests funding to meet increased utility costs at all facilities. Without funding to offset increased electricity, natural gas, sewer, garbage, and heating oil costs, key activities protecting Washington's fish, wildlife, and ecosystems will decline, including salmon and trout production. Moreover, WDFW hatcheries produce fish that support Washington's tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries, contribute recovery efforts for salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and contribute significantly to the state economy. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

8U - Utility Rate Adjustments

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) requests funding to meet increased utility costs at all facilities. Without funding to offset increased electricity, natural gas, sewer, garbage, and heating oil costs, key activities protecting Washington's fish, wildlife, and ecosystems will decline, including salmon and trout production. Moreover, WDFW hatcheries produce fish that support Washington's tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries, contribute recovery efforts for salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and contribute significantly to the state economy. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

FC - Survey Flight Cost Increases

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) uses charter air services for animal capture, radio tracking, and aerial surveying to help preserve and protect Washington's fish and wildlife. The Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (DES) master contract manages the different charter services available. Due to an economic adjustment, the master contract experienced a 10.17% price increase for the fiscal year 2023. WDFW is requesting funds to help cover the increased costs incurred this fiscal year due to the applied economic adjustment. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

RI - Reclassified IT Positions

ABS 029 Summarized Revenue by Account and Source
Department of Fish and Wildlife
Agency Level
WDFW - 23-25BN Submittal
Dollars in Thousands

During the 2019-21 biennium the Legislature provided increased funding to state government agencies for the information technology (IT) workforce. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) received additional funding in the 2021-23 Biennial budget and the 2022 Supplemental budget. Following the creation of the IT Professional Structure, state employees were reclassified. Many employees across the state pursued a reevaluation of the job classification by appealing the initial placement. Funding provided in the 2020 Supplemental budget was intended to fully fund the statewide reclassification process; however, it was insufficient to cover the increased costs from subsequent appeals and final placements. WDFW is requesting funding for increased compensation costs for the final four information technology positions to meet its obligation to compensate these employees at the r determined by the State Human Resources (SHR).

RI - Reclassified IT Positions

During the 2019-21 biennium the Legislature provided increased funding to state government agencies for the information technology (IT) workforce. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) received additional funding in the 2021-23 Biennial budget and the 2022 Supplemental budget. Following the creation of the IT Professional Structure, state employees were reclassified. Many employees across the state pursued a reevaluation of the job classification by appealing the initial placement. Funding provided in the 2020 Supplemental budget was intended to fully fund the statewide reclassification process; however, it was insufficient to cover the increased costs from subsequent appeals and final placements. WDFW is requesting funding for increased compensation costs for the final four information technology positions to meet its obligation to compensate these employees at the r determined by the State Human Resources (SHR).

ABS 029 Summarized Revenue by Account and Source
Department of Fish and Wildlife
Agency Level
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WDFW Puget Sound Action Agenda 2023-25 Biennial Totals (dollars in thousands)				
Request Title	Code	Puget Sound Portion	FTEs	Account
Body Cameras and Public Records	BA	\$ 556	3.0	001-General Fund
Building a Carbon-Neutral WDFW	CN	\$ 1,051	2.5	001-General Fund
Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW	BC	\$ 2,636	11.7	001-General Fund
Critical Infrastructure Maintenance	CM	\$ 2,125	8.6	001-General Fund
Emerging Toxics in Chinook and Orca	EM	\$ 2,412	4.5	23P-Model Toxics Control Operating Account
Engaging Volunteers in Conservation	EV	\$ 810	7.0	001-General Fund
Expand Wildlife Conflict Response	WC	\$ 5,940	33.3	001-General Fund
Geoduck Stock Assessment	GS	\$ 1,328	4.0	001-General Fund
Hatchery Investment Strategy	HA	\$ 2,949	5.1	001-General Fund
HPA Permitting System Replacement	HP	\$ 4,403	2.0	001-General Fund
Legacy Systems Replacement	LS	\$ 689	2.5	001-General Fund
Manage Impacts to State Lands	SL	\$ 794	3.6	001-General Fund
Restoring Washington's Biodiversity	RB	\$ 3,193	13.0	001-General Fund
Fish Passage Maintenance Team	MT	\$ 609	5.0	001-General Fund
Wildlife Disease Surveillance	WD	\$ 386	1.4	001-General Fund
Mass Marking Wage Adjustment	WA	\$ 929		24N-Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 224		001-General Fund
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 57		001-General Fund (Federal)
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 22		001-General Fund (Private/Local)
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 28		02R-Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 158		24N-Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 10		104-State Wildlife Account
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 1		21S-Aquatic Invasive Species Management Account
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 7		110-Special Wildlife Account (Private/Local)
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 4		071-Warm Water Game Fish Account
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 90		444-Fish and Wildlife Equipment Revolving Account (Non-appropriated)
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ 132		001-General Fund
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ 81		001-General Fund (Federal)
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ (17)		001-General Fund (Private/Local)
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ 73		02R-Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ 760		24N-Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ (668)		104-State Wildlife Account
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ (4)		21S-Aquatic Invasive Species Management Account
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ (1)		098-Eastern Washington Pheasant Enhancement Account (Federal)
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ 1		110-Special Wildlife Account
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ 7		04M-Recreational Fisheries Enhancement
Equipment Maintenance and Software	9Q	\$ 1,902		001-General Fund
Equipment Replacement Costs	9S	\$ 784		001-General Fund
Wildlife Rehabilitation	WR	\$ 180		14A-Wildlife Rehabilitation Account
Building Salmon Team Capacity	ST	\$ 558	2.7	001-General Fund
County and Other Assessments	CA	\$ 68		001-General Fund
Ongoing Essential Work	EW	\$ 4,878	75.8	001-General Fund
Survey Flight Cost Increases	FC	\$ 169		001-General Fund
Fisheries Enforcement Compliance	FE	\$ 1,981	15.0	001-General Fund
Hatchery Fish Food Cost Increases	HF	\$ 624		001-General Fund
Monitor Shellfish Harvest	SH	\$ 4,077	13.6	001-General Fund
Increased Pamphlet Costs	PA	\$ 176		24N-Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account
Increased Pamphlet Costs	PA	\$ 22		071-Warm Water Game Fish Account
Pro-Equity, Anti-Racism (PEAR)	PP	\$ 340	2.0	001-General Fund
Zooplankton Monitoring Program	ZM	\$ 1,008	0.5	001-General Fund
Wallace River Hatchery	30000660	\$ 17,228		057-State Building Construction Account
PSNERP Match Duckabush Estuary Habitat Re	30000846	\$ 41,000		057-State Building Construction Account
SRKW - Sol Duc Hatchery Modifications	40000147	\$ 1,186		057-State Building Construction Account
Soos Creek Hatchery Renovation	30000661	\$ 4,100		057-State Building Construction Account
Minter Creek Hatchery - Replace Intake	30000277	\$ 1,441		057-State Building Construction Account
Samish Hatchery - Friday Creek Intake & Fish F	30000276	\$ 1,630		057-State Building Construction Account
Fish and Wildlife Health and Biosecurity Facility	40000090	\$ 7,805		057-State Building Construction Account
SRKW Samish Hatchery Expansion and Adult F	30000679	\$ 1,910		057-State Building Construction Account
Sol Duc Hatchery Intake Barrier and Boat Chute	30000672	\$ 4,730		057-State Building Construction Account
Marblemount Hatchery - Renovation	30000847	\$ 120		057-State Building Construction Account (Federal)
Hood Canal Shellfish Harvest Access Area		\$ 3,000		057-State Building Construction Account
Eells Spring Renovation	30000214	\$ 12,486		057-State Building Construction Account
Deschutes Watershed Center (Prog)	20062008	\$ 12,000		057-State Building Construction Account

All accounts are state authority, unless otherwise designated.

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Policy Level Decision Packages:

1. Body Cameras and Public Records

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23: Good Governance and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #163) Increase trust by including and communicating directly and effectively with new and diverse audiences by *building WDFWs capacity to support transparent governing processes through the use of body wearable camera technologies that support public expectations for regarding police interactions and accountability*. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary Criteria – Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by *supporting WDFW enforcement programs through increased public transparency*.

2. Building a Carbon-Neutral WDFW

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 19 Greenhouse Gas Emissions by *decreasing the vulnerability of Puget Sound to climate change by decreasing the magnitude of climate change through large scale institutional reductions in greenhouse gases for WDFW that also advance Puget Sound statutory goals for greenhouse gas reduction*. This decision package is also directly aligned with several actions in Strategy 19. This decision package supports Action (ID 136) Develop and implement plans, regulations, and incentives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from all sources, especially primary emitting sources (those that account for more than 16 percent of emissions) including land use and transportation; electricity; residential, commercial, and industrial building; and heating by implementing key opportunity Fully implement the Clean Fuel Standards Act, Clean Energy Transformation Act, and Climate Commitment Act; maintain continued engagement and accountability practices to ensure policies have long term impact by *implementing programs that will allow WDFW to meet its statutory requirements related to the Clean Energy Transformation Act by putting WDFW on track to meet the next RCW 70A.45.050 limit of reducing emissions 45% by 2030*. This decision package also supports Action (ID 136) Develop and implement plans, regulations, and incentives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from all sources, especially primary emitting sources (those that account for more than 16 percent of emissions) including land use and transportation; electricity; residential, commercial, and industrial building; and heating by implementing key opportunity Support the electrification of public fleets, including Washington State Ferries; increase use of renewables, decrease use of fossil fuels, and promote the creation of circular economies by *supporting research and planning for WDFW's transition to a low-emissions fleet by addressing current and upcoming technologies that could meet operational demands such as electric trucks, renewable diesel, and hybrid boat motors; infrastructure needs; costs; maintenance; and policy questions such as impacts on employee workflows*. This decision package also supports Action (ID #141), increase and ensure institutional infrastructure and funding for research and monitoring to explore, track, and evaluate the efficacy and feasibility of carbon sequestration and emissions reduction by implementing key opportunity research, fund, and utilize low carbon technologies, including battery technology, energy storage, and distribution, as well as carbon sequestration in forests, soils, and as blue carbon, by *supporting WDFW's capacity for GHG emissions data collection, analysis, and tracking that would support future carbon reduction strategies*.

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This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery by implementing key opportunity to assess the readiness of Puget Sound hatcheries to provide and adapt their services in the face of climate change *by researching options for WDFW to measure and reduce nitrous oxide emissions from hatchery fish.*

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria: Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring capacity to track greenhouse gas emissions data by WDFW programs and operations.* Additionally, this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 43, take aggressive, comprehensive and sustained action to reduce human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, with the goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2050 and Salmon Strategy recommendation 4 *by implementing greenhouse gas reduction programs that will allow WDFW to meet its statutory requirements.*

3. Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6: fish passage barriers and is directly aligned with Action (#152) Inventory and assess all fish passage barriers (culverts, dams, etc.). Prioritize, sequence, and implement fish passage barrier correction or removal in watersheds by implementing key opportunities 1) Support Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) compilation and development of statewide strategies, in collaboration with tribal nations, other agencies, and local partners, including prioritization and sequencing of barriers, and 2) Include stormwater and climate change priorities in transportation plans, *by improving WDFW's Climate Smart Culvert tool that will be used by engineers and resource managers to assess how culvert design should be modified to account for projected climate change.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 14: Invasive species and is directly aligned Action (ID# 203), Create an integrated planning approach to protect and enhance biodiversity in the Puget Sound ecosystem by mitigating the threat of invasive species by implementing key opportunity, collaborate on monitoring and mitigation across state and local agencies and tribal co-managers *by increasing WDFW's capacity to monitor trends in non-native predatory fish in critical stream habitat.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by increasing WDFW's capacity to monitor non-native predatory fish relevant to salmon habitat.* This decision package is indirectly aligned with Strategy 15 Action #204 Reduce displacement, competition, and predation of imperiled native species caused by native or invasive species *by increasing WDFW's capacity to monitor trends in non-native predatory fish in critical stream habitat that will inform adaptive management.*

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 18: Awareness of Effects of Climate Change and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 131) Expand monitoring, research, and assessment of the individual and cumulative impacts and risks of climate change on Puget Sound *by assessing and building institutional awareness of the vulnerability of WDFW lands and supporting infrastructure to climate change impacts.*

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 20: Climate Adaptation and Resilience *by increasing WDFW ability to better protect and restore ecosystems and benefit human*

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well-being by meeting species conservation and recovery goals by providing harvest and recreation opportunities under a changing climate, providing effective technical assistance, permitting, research, and planning that account for projected changes in climate, and increasing the resilience of WDFW's lands and infrastructure to the observed and projected impacts of climate change. This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID# 137) Implement multi-benefit projects and programs that synergistically advance Puget Sound recovery goals and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase carbon sequestration in Puget Sound ecosystems, increase climate adaptation, and promote climate resilience by implementing key opportunity, identify and address climate change risks to ensure resilience and reliability of infrastructure necessary for transportation (including roads, culverts, and bridges), communication, wastewater treatment, stormwater management, and power, *by improving WDFW's Climate Smart Culvert tool that will be used by engineers and resource managers to assess how culvert design related to fish passage barriers should be modified to account for projected climate change.*

This decision package is directly aligned Action (ID #148) Develop and enhance guidance on best practices to reduce emissions and risks and adapt to the most impactful climate stressors by implementing key opportunity, update local, regional, state, and tribal nations' guidance and planning documents to require the integration of adequate and timely responses to changing climate and ocean conditions *by increasing WDFW staff capacity to ensure that guidance provided to local jurisdictions, pursuant to their Growth Management Act Comprehensive Plan updates, Critical Area Ordinances, Shoreline Management Act applications, and other efforts accounts for the impacts of climate change on fish, wildlife, and habitat affected.* This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 148) Increase availability of data, tools, and training, and increase the technical capacity of partners in the recovery community, to reduce the magnitude of and vulnerability to climate change, and advance adaptation of the Puget Sound socio-ecological system *by integrating dynamic spatial models like TerrAdapt into adaptive management plans, enabling WDFW managers to better prioritize where conservation actions are implemented to maintain ecologically connected networks of habitat that support a thriving and resilient network of ecosystems across Washington.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C: Research and Monitoring *by increasing recovery research and monitoring related to future climate conditions of critical ecosystems, fisheries, and non-native predatory fish.* This package is directly aligned Action (ID #188) Develop and analyze alternative future scenarios to help leaders make decisions that will lead to system-level change under a range of projections for climate change, population growth, and other uncertainties. *by implementing key opportunity Institute future scenarios approaches as a mindset facilitated through tool kits designed to enable practitioners in the recovery system to consider the many ways the future may unfold and how strategies can be made more robust, responsive, and effective by improving WDFW's Climate Smart Culvert tool that will be used by engineers and resource managers to assess how culvert design related to fish passage barriers should be modified to account for projected climate change.*

This decision package implements the Priority Action 3 Assess the degree, and how, access to marine and coastal resources (e.g. fisheries, open space, native foods) is changing among different communities in the Salish Sea from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by supporting implementation of an entanglement risk and bycatch monitoring program to support cross program marine wildlife recovery efforts and marine fisheries planning under changing climate.* This decision packages also fulfills the

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Secondary criteria - Adds value by filling gaps from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by addressing the gap of ecological trends in non-native predatory fish in response to climate change.*

This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy 3 Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to their historical habitat, *by improving WDFW's Climate Smart Culvert tool that will be used by engineers and resource managers to assess how culvert design related to fish passage barriers should be modified to account for projected climate change.* This decision package also indirectly implements Salmon strategy 6 Address predatory and food web issues for salmon, *by supporting monitoring efforts of non-native predatory fish to develop ecological information that would support predatory fish management.*

This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca task force recommendation 14: reduce populations of nonnative predatory fish species that prey upon or compete with Chinook *by supporting monitoring efforts of non-native predatory fish to develop ecological information that would support management.* This decision package also indirectly implements Orca task force recommendation 45: Mitigate the impact of a changing climate by accelerating and increasing action to increase the resiliency and vitality of salmon populations and the ecosystems on which they depend *by increasing WDFW's capacity to support climate resiliency projects, programs, research, monitoring and technical assistance that could support ecosystems that salmon rely on.*

4. Columbia River ESA Permitting

NA, program activities not in Puget Sound

5. Critical Infrastructure Maintenance

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by supporting continued maintenance and operation of WDFW hatcheries to maintain fish production and limit mortality to support salmon recovery and harvest.* This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID# 205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity, continue to implement increased state and tribal hatchery production to support prey availability for Southern Resident Orca, and indirectly aligned with Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by supporting WDFW's fish hatchery production by ensuring hatchery infrastructure is maintained to ensure day-to-day operations are efficient and cost effective, minimize workplace hazards for staff and the public; and mitigating production disruptions for loss of fish.*

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary Criteria: Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by increasing or maintaining WDFW's hatchery salmon production through increased infrastructure maintenance and safety.* Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce Recommendation 6 significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases

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need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, and Salmon Strategy Recommendation 5 More effectively integrate salmon recovery into harvest, hatcheries and hydropower.

This decision package is necessary to support the ongoing Fisheries and Hatcheries Science Management program which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies: 15 Salmon Recovery, 17 Responsible Boating, 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship, 24 – Cultural Practices and Local Foods, 25 Economic Benefits, and 26 Human Health.

6. Emerging Fishery Implementation

N/A, not in Puget Sound

7. Emerging Toxics in Chinook and Orca

By increasing capacity at WDFW to identify the location and sources of Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CEC) exposure in order to guide conservation measures to reduce toxic chemicals in Puget Sound, this decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 8 Toxic Chemical Pollution and is directly aligned with Action (ID #43) Prioritize, prevent, and manage (regulations, permits, and incentives) chemicals of emerging concern by implementing key opportunity Identify, prioritize, and monitor chemicals of emerging concern (CECs) (including integration of human health risk and thresholds). This package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C Research and Monitoring and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#121) Direct and leverage funding and investments to advance science, monitoring, and adaptive management for Puget Sound recovery. This decision package implements the priority action 8 Assess toxic contaminant sources, (both historic and ongoing) and prioritize their clean-up or replacement based on environmental and human health impacts from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 33, Increase monitoring of toxic substances in marine water and create and deploy adaptive management strategies to reduce threats to orcas and their prey. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy 6 Address predatory and food web issues for salmon.

8. Engaging Volunteers in Conservation

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22: Outdoor Recreation, and Stewardship and Strategy E: Stewardship and Motivating Action, *by encouraging increased access to information and opportunities for public volunteer engagement in outdoor stewardship in Puget Sound.* This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Action Develop, fund, and promote culturally relevant projects and programs to encourage and incentivize behavior changes that will protect, restore, and enable responsible enjoyment and stewardship of Puget Sound (ID #159) *by increasing the number of support staff managing volunteer programs that will accelerate local engagement to protect fish, wildlife, and their habitat, and provide sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities.* This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy E Action (ID #127) Build social and institutional infrastructure that supports stewardship behaviors and removes barriers by implementing two key opportunities, allocating funding to build the capacity of residents and community-based organizations to engage in stewardship behaviors, and bolstering and expanding voluntary environmental programs for local businesses and

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private landowners, particularly those owned by vulnerable populations and underserved communities, *by increasing the capacity of WDFW to support regionally relevant volunteer programs that advance recovery goals and stewardship.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C Research and Monitoring *by increasing WDFW's capacity for monitoring and assessment and through volunteer conservation programs.* This decision package is directly aligned Action (ID # 122) Coordinate efforts to assess and report on ecosystem conditions and the effectiveness of ecosystem recovery strategies and actions by implementing key opportunity, ensure that local, long-term, and inherently efficient volunteer monitoring programs are well funded, maintained, regionally respected, and designed to offer the added benefit of educating and involving the public *by increasing the number of support staff managing volunteer programs that will accelerate local engagement to protect fish, wildlife, and their habitat, and provide sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities.*

This decision package fulfills the Secondary Criteria Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 8 to strengthen science, monitoring and accountability, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 35, to conduct research, science and monitoring to inform decision-making, adaptive management and implementation of actions to recover Southern Residents, *by implementing community science led efforts to support data collection efforts for Washington's 268 Species of Greatest Conservation Need which includes several regionally relevant salmon species and orcas.*

9. Expand Wildlife Conflict Response

This decision is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 2: Working Lands *by consolidating and improving agency response to wildlife conflicts. Consolidation and improved response will reduce producer frustrations, lower costly claims for damage payments, and allow for a seamless response and follow-through to dangerous wildlife conflicts including conflicts with bears and cougars.* This package also directly aligns Action (ID#4) Support the long-term viability and sustainability of agricultural lands and working forests to reduce pressure for conversion from the current use to a more developed use *through expanding incentives and technical assistance for agricultural lands and owners of working forests.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 21: Place Attachment *by consolidating and expanding its response to wildlife conflicts. Wildlife conflict specialists address crop damage and dangerous wildlife interactions, increasing preventative education and outreach and freeing enforcement officer time for other priority duties.* This decision package also aligns with Action (ID#158) increase access to and visibility of mental health connections to a healthy natural environment *by managing and preserving natural areas for stress reduction, motivation, and long-term attachments.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22: Outdoor Recreation & Stewardship *by adding more Conflict Specialists to the agency in order to increase proactive and preemptive measures to potentially decrease human-wildlife conflicts.* Through these efforts, this decision package *indirectly aligns* with Action (ID#160) identify and fund removal of barriers resulting in the exclusion of people from participating in recreation and stewardship activities.

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This decision packages fulfills the secondary criteria support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by supporting WDFW Wildlife program's capacity to respond to wildlife conflict.*

10. Geoduck Stock Assessment

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 25: Economic Benefits *by increasing capacity to support stock assessment, research, and environment programs that ensure a sustainable geoduck fishery industry in Puget Sound.* This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Food and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 91) Improve appropriate access opportunities for harvesting local foods and other culturally significant materials on public lands and shorelines *by increasing capacity to support stock assessment, research, and environment programs that ensure a safe, local, and sustainable geoduck industry and harvest in Puget Sound.* Through these efforts this decision package also implements the Priority Action 3 Assess the degree, and how, access to marine and coastal resources (e.g., fisheries, open space, native foods) is changing among different communities in the Salish Sea from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan.

11. Hatchery Investment Strategy

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is directly aligned with Action (ID# 205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity, continue to implement increased state and tribal hatchery production to support prey availability for Southern Resident Orca *by increasing WDFW's hatchery capacity to produce recreational and commercial harvest, tribal harvest, Southern Resident Orca (SRO) prey, and catalyze conservation efforts for wild salmonids through increased pathogen monitoring, fish marking to meet regulatory requirements, and facilities operation. The Treaty Tribes and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) co- manage hatchery production and salmon harvest allocations in Washington State.* This decision package is also indirectly aligned Action (ID#206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by increasing WDFW's hatchery salmon production through increased pathogen monitoring, fish marking to meet regulatory requirements, and facilities operation and staff.* Through these efforts this decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria: support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan, directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 6: Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy Recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower with salmon recovery

This decision package is necessary to support the ongoing Fisheries and Hatcheries Science Management which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies 15 Salmon Recovery, 17 responsible boating, 22 outdoor recreation and stewardship, 24 cultural practices and local foods, 25 economic benefits, and 26 Human Health.

12. HPA Permitting System Replacement

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This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 3 Healthy Shorelines and is directly aligned with Action (ID #14), increase and improve shoreline regulation implementation, compliance, enforcement, and, communication by implementing key opportunities 1) evaluate and improve implementation of existing shoreline regulations and policies (which could include single-family residences as well as emergency construction permits) and 2) conduct effective and active compliance monitoring and enforcement to support and reinforce permitting decisions by state and local regulatory agencies, *by ensuring that the public facing HPA permitting online system required for shoreline modification is functional, efficient, and aids in future compliance of shoreline regulations that support functioning shoreline habitat, species, and food webs.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23: Good Governance *by increasing transparency of decision-making processes related to shoreline regulations specific to HPA permitting by ensuring a clear and transparent online system for the public, tribes, and other communities.* This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#163), increase trust by including and communicating directly and effectively with new and diverse audiences *by ensuring that a public facing online permitting system that is the pathway for decision making at the state agency level is clear, transparent, and functional to increase trust and communication with the diverse partners.*

This decision package is necessary to support the ongoing Hydraulic Approval Program which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies: 3-Healthy Shorelines, 4-Riparian Areas, 5-Floodplains and Estuaries, 6-Fish Passage Barriers, 7-Sumerged Aquatic Vegetation, 22-Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria: Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring the integrity of the HPA online permitting system, where data is ultimately collected about HPA permits in Puget Sound, is functional and can be used for future regulatory and compliance reviews across the region.* This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Task Force recommendation 3: Apply and enforce laws that protect habitat, *by enhancing state agencies' capacity for implementation and enforcement of the state Hydraulic Code and fish passage regulations by ensuring a functional HPA online permitting system for staff and partners.* This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 1: Protect and restore vital salmon habitat *by ensuring a functional online permitting system for HPAs that are often required in shoreline construction projects that may support restoration projects for vital salmon habitat.*

13. Legacy Systems Replacement

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C Research and monitoring because data management underpins the success of WDFW to implement this strategy including using the SCoRE webtool that will be addressed through this decision package. This decision package provides the technological resources and frameworks for WDFW ongoing programs to be able to implement all the Action Agenda strategies that they are aligned with. Thus, it aligns with 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23 Good Governance by ensuring WDFW can work effectively and transparently to achieve our mission.

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This package fulfills the secondary criteria Support continuity by ensuring that WDFW ongoing programs, such as the Salmonid Life Histories and Survival Research program, have the technological infrastructure to maintain effectiveness and continue to support Puget Sound recovery. This decision package ensures the technological support for WDFW to implement the Salmon Strategy Recommendations 1: Protect and restore vital salmon habitat; 5: more effectively integrate salmon recovery into harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower; and 8: Strengthen science, monitoring, and accountability.

14. Manage Impacts to State Lands

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship and is directly aligned with Action (ID#159) Develop, fund, and promote culturally relevant projects and programs to encourage and incentivize behavior changes that will protect, restore, and enable responsible enjoyment and stewardship of Puget Sound by implementing key opportunity, Increase understanding of the connections between outdoor recreation and stewardship activities. Through these efforts this decision package also indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy 1: Protect and restore vital salmon habitat.

This decision package implements the Priority Action 15 Explore and advance the use of methods to integrate human dimensions with biophysical targets and goals by decision makers from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by refining and applying an Ecological Inventory Assessment (EIA) system investigating ecosystem health, recreation, and stewardship uses to adaptively manage WDFW-managed lands in coordination with State Parks, DNR, and with federally recognized tribes to integrate their values into this monitoring and adaptive management approach.*

15. Restoring Washington's Biodiversity

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategies: 1 Smart Growth, 2 Working Lands, 3 Healthy Shorelines, 4 Riparian Areas, 5 Floodplains and Estuaries, 6 Fish Passage Barriers, 7 Freshwater Availability, 12 Working Lands Runoff, 13 Oil Spills, 14 Invasive Species, 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery, 18 Awareness of the effects of climate change, 20 Climate adaptation and resilience, 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship, 23 Cultural Practices and Local Foods, 25 Economic Benefits, A Funding, B Strategic Leadership and Collaboration, C Research and Monitoring, D Education Partnerships, and E Stewardship and Motivating Action *by increasing WDFW's capacity to 1) develop and implement recovery plans, including but not limited to implementing or assisting partners in species and habitat protection and recovery actions and promptly addressing habitat and species recovery planning needs, 2) Stop or slow declines in species and habitat loss, including but not limited to focusing efforts on key at-risk species and habitats, enhancing the level of support for local, state, and federal decision makers and landowners, improving compliance with existing laws and rules, improving landowner participation in biodiversity recovery, addressing future scenarios like climate change, 3) Improve our knowledge of species and habitats status, trends, and needs, including but not limited to increasing science, planning, and action implementation capacity to fill critical knowledge gaps, and 4) Support partnerships, public engagement, and conservation education to restore biodiversity, including but not limited to supporting critical partners biodiversity*

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work, growing community awareness, engagement, and participation in recovering Washington's biodiversity, and supporting future conservation leaders and stewards.

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 1 Action ID #178 Improve the Growth Management Act and local land use planning to effectively channel growth and prevent conversion of ecologically important lands *by increasing WDFW's capacity to provide technical planning assistance and improving compliance with existing laws and rules by assisting landowners in complying with fish protection regulations and supporting local governments' implementation of fish and wildlife protection and planning under the Growth Management Act and Shoreline Management Act, which includes implementing key opportunity Integrate climate change mitigation and resilience and salmon restoration goals and strategies into the GMA and local land use plans.*

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 1 Action ID 1 Build Puget Sound-wide support to prevent conversion of forests, farms, and natural areas and increase funding for conservation incentives by implementing key opportunity Improve the education and incentives for public and decision-makers on opportunities to direct growth away from ecologically important areas *by expanding engagement with willing landowners and conservation districts to deliver incentives for habitat restoration and protection, such as outreach and participation in WDFW's "Habitat at Home" program, creating land acquisition or easement opportunities, and supporting social marketing efforts project aimed at identifying barriers and incentives for private landowners to implement habitat protection and restoration on their property.*

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 2 Action (ID #4) Support the long-term viability and sustainability of agricultural lands and working forests to reduce pressure for conversion from the current use to a more developed use by implementing key opportunity Expand incentives and technical assistance for agricultural lands and owners of working forests, by improving landowner participation in biodiversity recovery through efforts like increasing outreach and participation in Farm Bill programs designed to support agricultural producers while also benefiting fish and wildlife and private lands access.

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 3 Action (ID #14) Increase and improve shoreline regulation implementation, compliance, enforcement, and communication by implementing key opportunities: Evaluate and improve implementation of existing shoreline regulations and policies (which could include single-family residences as well as emergency construction permits), Conduct effective and active compliance monitoring and enforcement to support and reinforce permitting decisions by state and local regulatory agencies; prevent conversion of nearshore habitats through voluntary acquisition and conservation easements *by expanding engagement with landowners and local government planners to provide technical assistance and to deliver incentives for nearshore habitat protection or create acquisition and easement opportunities, supporting local governments' implementation of fish and wildlife protection and planning under the Growth Management Act and Shoreline Management Act), increasing capacity for WDFW's civil compliance program to help property owners protect fish during construction projects increasing compliance of Hydraulic Project Approvals (HPAs).*

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 4 Action ID #201 Provide incentives, financial and technical support to local jurisdictions that have prioritized riparian restoration by implementing key opportunities: Fund and implement technical assistance and outreach programs

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with riparian landowners to assist in the implementation of BMPs that will protect, restore, and enhance riparian habitat, Provide technical support and enforcement capacity to local jurisdictions, and Support policies that improve effectiveness and advance the intent of the GMA and SMP *by collaborating with local communities, tribes, and conservation partners to identify and address limiting factors to habitat recovery, providing guidance and best practices on how to manage riparian habitat to support fish and wildlife, and building landowner support and incentives for riparian protection and restoration.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 5 Action (ID #12) Increase the number and accelerate implementation of habitat acquisition and restoration projects as prioritized in salmon and watershed recovery plans *by supporting implementation of salmon recovery plans across WDFW work through planning, management, and providing technical assistance to landowners and planners through engineering capacity for fish passage and water crossings and riverine/floodplain dynamics.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 5 Action (ID #195) Increase and improve floodplain and estuary regulation implementation, compliance, enforcement, incentives, and communication *by assisting landowners in complying with fish protection regulations and supporting local governments' implementation of fish and wildlife protection and planning under the Growth Management Act and Shoreline Management Act, which includes implementing key opportunity Integrate climate change mitigation and resilience and salmon restoration goals and strategies into the GMA and local land use plans.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 6 Action (ID #152) Inventory and assess all fish passage barriers (culverts, dams, etc.). Prioritize, sequence, and implement fish passage barrier correction or removal in watersheds, *by providing technical engineering assistance to landowners, partners, and tribes to address fish passage, and by implementing salmon recovery plans.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 7 Action (ID #27) Implement and improve technologies, voluntary programs, financial and technical assistance programs, and market-based approaches to reduce water demand and encourage conservation and Action (ID #29) Understand and plan for future water needs and changing climate and ecosystem conditions by engaging all water users in a watershed to identify specific actions around water science, technology, management, and conservation *by providing place-based expertise at the watershed or ecoregion scale and effectively collaborating with local communities, tribes, and conservation partners to identify and address limiting factors to habitat recovery in watersheds, and also providing technical capacity to support an Intensively Managed Watershed long term restoration and monitoring program.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 13 Action (ID #64) Analyze the cumulative risk and consequences of oil spills, assess the effectiveness and feasibility of mitigation measures, and target additional spill prevention efforts, Action (ID #65) Strengthen and integrate spill response readiness of all partners, including federal, state, tribal nations, local government, oil spill response organizations, and transboundary partners, and Action (ID #66) Increase capacity for early local response to spills and seek restoration using the best available science and technology, *by increasing WDFW's capacity to prepare and respond to oil spills strategically and proactively, and to advance orca deterrence actions.*

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This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 14 Action (ID #202) Develop, fund, and implement coordinated outreach and incentive programs that educate and raise awareness and motivate action for Puget Sound residents (including boaters) to reduce the spread of invasive species, Action (ID #46) Prevent and rapidly respond to the introduction and spread of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species, including green crab, predatory fish, and invasive plants Action (ID #203) Create an integrated planning approach to protect and enhance biodiversity in the Puget Sound ecosystem by mitigating the threat of invasive species *by developing species recovery plans for species at risk that address biodiversity and mitigating risks by invasive species, coordinating with landowners to support removal of invasive species, and implement recovery actions to address known threats such as predation from invasive animals or disease.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Actions (ID #204) Reduce displacement, competition, and predation of imperiled native species caused by native or invasive species, (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca, ID #206 Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights, *by develop and implementing salmon recovery plans and addressing conservation and restoration actions that increase vital salmon habitat across the state. This work includes but is not limited to developing the Stillaguamish Integrated Conservation and Rebuilding (SICoR) Team, with a mission to conserve and recover habitat for the benefit of coho salmon, steelhead, and Chinook salmon fisheries, and also engaging in cooperative habitat restoration with the Umatilla and Nez Pierce Tribes, federal, state and local government partners, conservation districts, and the local community in the Tucannon and Walla Walla River Basins where actions include in-stream habitat, floodplain function, summer flow restoration, and fish passage work.*

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 18 Action (ID #131) Expand monitoring, research, and assessment of the individual and cumulative impacts and risks of climate change on Puget Sound by implementing key opportunity Increase monitoring, research, and systematic assessment of climate stressors such as ocean acidification, sea surface and stream temperature and their compounding impacts *by increasing science, planning, and action implementation capacity to fill critical knowledge gaps about climate change effects on biodiversity, disease, and forest management strategies, which includes answering priority questions about how wildlife communities and food webs would change as a result of climate changes in range, how ecosystems, plant communities, pollinators, mammals, birds, invertebrates, and lizards are responding to changes in wildland fire frequency and intensity related to climate change. This package also supports capacity to incorporate climate change into conservation strategies and recovery plans for Species of Greatest Conservation Need.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 20 Action (ID #137) Implement multi-benefit projects and programs that synergistically advance Puget Sound recovery goals and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase carbon sequestration in Puget Sound ecosystems, increase climate adaptation, and promote climate resilience *by supporting statewide biodiversity and ecosystem recovery efforts and addressing critical knowledge gaps that ensure species resilience to current and future climate impacts. This work includes but is not limited to ensure nearshore marine benthic communities are diverse, healthy, and resilient*

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This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 22 Action (ID #72) Engage communities to increase knowledge of responsible use, tribal nations' treaty and sovereign rights, and define responsible recreation opportunities within natural environments. Action (ID #159) Develop, fund, and promote culturally relevant projects and programs to encourage and incentivize behavior changes that will protect, restore, and enable responsible enjoyment and stewardship of Puget Sound *by supporting WDFW capacity to collaborate with local communities, tribes, and conservation partners to identify and address limiting factors to habitat recovery, increase public awareness and outreach on co-existing with wildlife and engaging in conservation and stewardship, Support WDFW's High Resolution Change Detection (HRCDD) data product which uses aerial imagery to identify land cover and changes throughout Puget Sound and will inform future voluntary programs, develop a regionally based fish and wildlife conservation education program to support the next generation and their families, update technical guidance documents and support social marketing project to identify barriers and incentives for private landowner participation, engage with landowners and local government planners to provide technical assistance and to deliver incentives for habitat protection or create acquisition and easement opportunities, enhance engagement with local communities to promote positive wildlife experiences and encourage people to participate in recovering biodiversity in Washington through WDFW's Habitat at Home program and biodiversity focused communications staff.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 23 Actions (ID #86) Increase number, accessibility, and protections for multi-use and multi-cultural natural spaces (for example, fish and shellfish harvesting, camping, boating, and gardening, etc.), including green spaces and waterways, (ID #89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts, (ID #91) Improve appropriate access opportunities for harvesting local foods and other culturally significant materials on public lands and shorelines *by increasing WDFW's capacity to accelerate recovery plans for species of cultural importance. This may include but is not limited to increasing capacity to survey for various freshwater fish and shellfish, particularly those listed as Species of Greatest Conservation Need, to increase baseline biological data to track populations and effectiveness of recovery actions over time, increasing capacity to support data analysis, survey design, and management actions to ensure conservation of critical forage fish species. This package will also support the Puget Sound Restoration Fund for recovery of Olympia Oysters which are historically, culturally, and biologically important shellfish.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 25 Action (ID #96) Conduct and coordinate research to improve the understanding of ecosystem-industry interactions, opportunities, and benefits *by increasing WDFW's capacity to implement species and habitat recovery and management plans, enforce regulations and guidance, and fill critical knowledge gaps that support the natural resource sector and catalyze economic benefits across Puget Sound.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy A Action (ID #173) Secure sustainable, equitable, and dedicated federal, state, local, and tribal nations funding sources to fully fund Puget Sound and salmon recovery and Action (ID #180) Establish and implement a major new source of state funding *by increasing funding necessary to implement WDFW's mandate to conserve fish and wildlife and working with partners to implement the State Wildlife Action Plan and other protection and recovery efforts in Washington's most important habitats.*

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This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy B Actions (ID #208) Elevate Puget Sound recovery as a priority for leadership at all levels, (ID #209) Broaden and deepen the coalition demanding a healthy Puget Sound, and (ID #128) Advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice in Puget Sound recovery efforts *by leading a statewide fish and wildlife conservation initiative to expand action and engagement for a “One Washington” approach to landscape-scale ecosystem recovery and fish and wildlife conservation in coordination with Tribes, partner organizations, and the public. This package also increases capacity to strengthen existing and create new relationships with outdoor organizations that have special focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion, and through WDFW’s Fish and Wildlife Conservation Education Program remove barriers for underserved groups to participate in outdoor learning and natural resource activities and support the next generation of WDFW staff, the Department will showcase natural resource careers and provide engagement opportunities for young people to explore career paths.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy C Actions (ID #121) Direct and leverage funding and investments to advance science, monitoring, and adaptive management for Puget Sound recovery, (ID #122) Coordinate efforts to assess and report on ecosystem conditions and the effectiveness of ecosystem recovery strategies and actions, (ID #184) Improve linkages among Indigenous knowledge and research and monitoring, (ID #185) Recognize and embrace human health and wellbeing as a component of ecosystem recovery by identifying and supporting interdisciplinary research that explores and emphasizes the ways in which the health and wellbeing of people and nature are integrated, (ID #186) Build and sustain robust programs and relationships across science-policy interfaces to inform recovery, (ID #187) Communicate science findings clearly and to the appropriate audiences, (ID #188) Develop and analyze alternative future scenarios to help leaders make decisions that will lead to system-level change under a range of projections for climate change, population growth, and other uncertainties *by improving our collective knowledge of species and habitats status, trends, and needs through increased capacity for science, planning, and action implementation to fill critical knowledge gaps. This package supports WDFW conservation biologists to work with research scientists to develop monitoring protocols for population status, distribution, and trends as well as for monitoring effectiveness of recovery actions and to fill gaps in knowledge about climate change effects on biodiversity, disease, and forest management strategies. Research and monitoring would include but not be limited to Cascade red fox, Ferruginous hawk & Golden eagle, Oregon spotted frog, forage fish, Prairie butterflies, ground squirrels, Northern leopard frog, Pinto abalone, and Olympia oysters. This package also includes support for collecting data on Species of Greatest Conservation Needs populations that will inform their status determination (e.g., endangered, threatened, not needing listing), including amphibians and reptiles, birds, forage fish, invertebrates, and mammals. This package also supports the use of innovative new technologies to monitor populations and gather data, including remote cameras with scent dispensers, thermal cameras (e.g., Forward Looking Infrared or “FLIR” cameras), automated radio telemetry (e.g., Motus towers), genetic and histological analysis, hydro-acoustic (sonar) surveys, and environmental DNA (eDNA) technology. This package also provides support for WDFW to continue to effectively collaborate with local communities, tribes, and conservation partners to identify and address limiting factors to habitat recovery and share information. This package also supports numerous recovery efforts support healthy ecosystems for clean water, clean air, natural flood control, noise pollution absorption, reduced heat island effects in urban areas, carbon sequestration, cultural practices, recreation, and physical and mental health benefits.*

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This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy D Actions (ID #189) Coordinate planning and implementation across education and restoration partner networks, (ID #191) Expand meaningful education and leadership experiences, internships and mentorships in classroom settings and ‘earn while you learn’ apprenticeships and other paid training opportunities, and (ID #212) Develop clear information on career pathways and the curriculum, training, and program tools needed to grow an equitable green workforce with durable, family wage jobs *by developing a regionally based fish and wildlife conservation education program to support the next generation and their families and foster lifelong stewardship and empathy for the natural world which includes empowering educators and WDFW staff with tools to engage K-12 students in science, technology, engineering, arts, and math and give students access to experiential learning opportunities, helping WDFW build stronger connections with underserved communities in Washington, and supporting young adults to have opportunities to explore careers in natural resources with WDFW. This package also increases WDFW’s capacity to support learner-centered experiences on public lands and includes funding support to defray transportation costs for at least 50 Title I school classrooms to take field trips to WDFW wildlife areas and fish hatcheries each year. This package also includes opportunities to engage zoo and aquaria in habitat recovery planning and coordinated assistance for reintroductions and public awareness and education opportunities. This package also supports a continued partnership with Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to develop Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)-aligned lesson plans focused on fish and wildlife conservation for K-5th grade, working with Washington Educational Service Districts, environmental education organizations, municipalities, and non-profit groups to offer NGSS lesson plan teacher trainings and workshops.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy E Actions (ID #125) Cultivate broad-scale stewardship practices and behaviors among Puget Sound residents that benefit Puget Sound, (ID #126) Build issue awareness and understanding to increase public support and engagement in recovery actions, (ID #127) Build social and institutional infrastructure that supports stewardship behaviors and removes barriers, (no ID) Investigate the research questions outlined within Social Science for the Salish Sea, *by supporting WDFW’s efforts to restore biodiversity and increase stewardship by increasing outreach and communications with the public, through WDFW’s Habitat at Home program and increasing WDFW’s biodiversity communication staff capacity. Biodiversity communications staff capacity will support but not be limited to public outreach and efforts to improve sanitation in areas where bears and people co-exist to minimize potential conflict to support grizzly bear recovery, content development focused on SGCN for WDFW’s website and social media platforms to increase public awareness and encourage involvement in species and habitat recovery, and proactive coordination with local media outlets to promote conservation efforts taking place in communities around the state. This package also supports developing a regionally based fish and wildlife conservation education program to support the next generation and their families and foster lifelong stewardship and empathy for the natural world. This package also supports WDFW’s capacity to develop incentives to encourage voluntary actions to conserve biodiversity on private lands. This package also supports a social marketing project aimed at identifying barriers and incentives for private landowners to implement habitat protection and restoration on their property. This package also supports delivering Farm Bill incentives to private landowners on the ground and collaborate directly with NRCS and FSA to ensure smooth transfer of technical assistance.*

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This decision package implements the priority action 3 Assess the degree, and how, access to marine and coastal resources (e.g. fisheries, open space, native foods) is changing among different communities in the Salish Sea from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by increasing WDFW's capacity to improving our collective knowledge of species and habitats status, trends, and needs of coastal and marine resources through increased capacity for science, planning, and action implementation to fill critical knowledge gaps. This may include but is not limited to increasing capacity to survey for various freshwater fish and shellfish, particularly those listed as Species of Greatest Conservation Need, to increase baseline biological data to track populations and effectiveness of recovery actions over time, increasing capacity to support data analysis, survey design, and management actions to ensure conservation of critical forage fish species. This package will also support the Puget Sound Restoration Funds for recovery of Olympia Oysters and Pinto Abalone which are historically, culturally, and biologically important shellfish.*

This decision package implements the priority actions: 5 Determine what incentives, human well-being factors, market drivers, tax systems, and characteristics influence residents', developers', and purchasers' choices that contribute to or prevent habitat conversion, and 6 Assess the effectiveness of incentive approaches in Puget Sound recovery efforts in the Salish Sea from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by increasing WDFW's capacity to understand develop incentives to encourage voluntary actions to conserve biodiversity. This package also supports a social marketing project aimed at identifying barriers and incentives for private landowners to implement habitat protection and restoration on their property. This package also supports delivering Farm Bill incentives to private landowners on the ground and collaborate directly with NRCS and FSA to ensure smooth transfer of technical assistance.*

This decision package supports the following goals identified in the final report from the Southern Resident Orca Task Force by providing added oil spill response capacity for WDFW, supporting increased access to prey through habitat restoration benefits, and increasing adherence to laws through enhanced public engagement: Increase Chinook salmon abundance, decrease disturbance of and risk to Southern Resident orcas from vessels and noise and increase access to their prey, Reduce the exposure of Southern Resident orcas and their prey to contaminants, and Ensure that funding, information, and accountability mechanisms are in place to support effective implementation. This decision package directly implements the Orca Task force recommendations 1: Significantly increase investment in restoration and acquisition of habitat in areas where Chinook stocks most benefit Southern Resident orcas, 2 Immediately fund acquisition and restoration of nearshore habitat to increase the abundance of forage fish for salmon sustenance, 5 Develop incentives to encourage voluntary actions to protect habitat. 15 Monitor forage fish populations to inform decisions on harvest and management actions that provide for sufficient feedstocks to support increased abundance of Chinook, 14 Reduce the threat of oil spills in Puget Sound to the survival of Southern Residents and 35 Conduct research, science and monitoring to inform decision-making, adaptive management and implementation of actions to recover Southern Residents.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy Recommendations 1 Protect and restore vital salmon habitat, 2 Invest in clean water infrastructure for salmon and people, 3 Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to historical habitat, 4 Build climate resiliency, 7 Enhance commitments and coordination across agencies and programs, 8 Strengthen science, monitoring, and accountability, *by increasing WDFW's capacity to develop and implement salmon recovery plans among partners, including but not limited to protection and restoration activities related*

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to critical salmon habitat, monitoring salmon species from individual to population levels and environmental trends from local to watershed and regional scales. This package also supports working with local integrating organizations and fish recovery boards to update salmon recovery plans. This package also includes but is not limited to developing the Stillaguamish Integrated Conservation and Rebuilding (SICoR) Team, with a mission to conserve and recover habitat for the benefit of coho salmon, steelhead, and Chinook salmon fisheries, and also engaging in cooperative habitat restoration with the Umatilla and Nez Pierce Tribes, federal, state and local government partners, conservation districts, and the local community in the Tucannon and Walla Walla River Basins where actions include in-stream habitat, floodplain function, summer flow restoration, and fish passage work.

16. Fish Passage Maintenance Team

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by *ensuring that harvest and hatchery adaptive management is successful by providing the capacity to maintain and improve 1768 miles of salmon habitat in fish passage structures so that reared fish are not lost*. This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID#205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca, by implementing key opportunity continue to implement best practices for hatchery management, including developing a joint co-manager hatchery policy, by *ensuring that hatchery adaptive management is successful by providing the capacity to maintain and improve fish screens and rearing facilities*.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 152) Inventory and assess all fish passage barriers (culverts, dams, etc.). Prioritize, sequence, and implement fish passage barrier correction or removal in watersheds. *by ensuring that harvest and hatchery adaptive management is successful by providing the capacity to maintain and improve 1768 miles of salmon habitat in fish passage structures, including cases where the fish passage structures themselves are in disrepair and are a barrier themselves so that reared fish are not lost*. Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6: Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, and This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon strategy recommendations 1 Protect and restore vital salmon habitat, 3 Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to their historical habitat, and 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision packages fulfills the SECONDARY CRITERIA Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by providing technical support to adaptively manage salmon habitat and recovery through fishway maintenance and hatchery rearing capacity*.

This decision package is necessary to support ongoing Fishery and Hatchery Science program which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies: 15: salmon recovery, 17, responsible boating, 22 Outdoor recreation and stewardship, 24 cultural practices and local foods, 25 economic

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benefits. This decision package is necessary to support ongoing Fish Passage program which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies: 6-Fish passage barriers, 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery, and 20: climate adaptation resilience.

17. Wildlife Disease Surveillance

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 18: Awareness of Effects of Climate Change and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 131) Expand monitoring, research, and assessment of the individual and cumulative impacts and risks of climate change on Puget Sound, *by increasing capacity to understand the climate impacts associated with vector borne diseases among wildlife and humans by supporting disease surveillance and response teams and data management systems.* This decision package fulfills the Secondary Criteria - Adds value by filling gaps from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by increasing capacity to understand the climate impacts associated with vector borne diseases among wildlife and humans by supporting disease surveillance and response teams and data management systems.* This decision package also fulfills the Secondary Criteria Continuing support *by ensuring that wildlife disease surveillance programs continue to be funded to support detection and rapid response of vector borne pathogens that may impact wildlife and human health.* This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca task force recommendation 35 Conduct research, science and monitoring to inform decision-making, adaptive management and implementation of actions to recover Southern Residents *by ensuring capacity for disease monitoring programs that provide input for adaptive management and mitigate risk for marine mammals and food webs.*

Maintenance Level Decision Packages

18. Mass Marking Wage Adjustment

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by ensuring WDFWs continued hatchery production of Chinook and coho salmon and associated mass marking of hatchery fish that informs adaptive management, environmental health, and mark-selective fisheries.* This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID# 205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity Work to reduce risk to wild populations by balancing the potential risks and benefits of hatchery production, and by conducting research on hatchery infrastructure and management to reduce the fitness differential between hatchery and wild populations *by ensuring adequate WDFW hatchery staffing capacity to maintain hatchery production and support a mark-selective fishery of coho and chinook salmon.* Through these efforts this decision packages fulfills the Secondary Criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan.

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This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, *by ensuring that staffing capacity for WDFW salmon hatcheries is maintained to maximize salmon production in the face of increased labor costs*. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower with salmon recovery by *continued hatchery production of Chinook and coho salmon and associated mass marking of hatchery fish that informs adaptive management, environmental health, and mark-selective fisheries*.

19. Fuel Rate Adjustments

For WDFW and its ongoing programs to succeed in implementing the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategies increased costs of fuel need to be accounted for in a way that does not detract from budgets directed to Puget Sound recovery programs. This decision package to address the inflationary increases in fuel costs is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy A Funding by ensuring fuel costs do not detract from Puget Sound recovery funding.

20. Utility Rate Adjustments

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods *by ensuring WDFWs continued hatchery production of salmon and game fish across the state despite increased utility costs, to increase populations consistent with recovery efforts*. Through these efforts this decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID#205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity Work to reduce risk to wild populations by balancing the potential risks and benefits of hatchery production, and by conducting research on hatchery infrastructure and management to reduce the fitness differential between hatchery and wild populations. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

21. Equipment Maintenance and Software

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This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23: Good Governance *by increasing WDFW administrative infrastructure technological functioning and ensuring a dependable network that will provide greater reliability to the public seeking hunting or fishing information, hydraulic project approval status, and other core service information.* This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring continued administrative infrastructure to support WDFW mission and serve the public related to Puget Sound recovery efforts.*

22. Equipment Replacement Costs

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods *by ensuring WDFWs continued hatchery production of salmon and other game fish across the state is efficient and supports a mark-selective fishery to inform adaptive management.* Through these efforts, this decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID#205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity Work to reduce risk to wild populations by balancing the potential risks and benefits of hatchery production, and by conducting research on hatchery infrastructure and management to reduce the fitness differential between hatchery and wild populations. This decision package is also indirectly aligned with Action (ID#89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that fish marking capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon hatchery that supports adaptive management of salmon recovery.* This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, *by ensuring fish marking capacity for WDFW salmonid hatcheries is maintained to adaptively manage a mark-selected fishery.* Through these efforts, this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

23. Capital Project Operating Costs

N/A, not in Puget Sound

24. Wildlife Rehabilitation

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 1 Smart Growth *by increasing WDFW wildlife rehabilitation staff and facility capacity which is necessary to address current and predicted increases to wildlife conflict and injury associated with population growth and land development and part of the adaptive management process.* This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship *by increasing WDFW wildlife*

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*rehabilitation staff and facility capacity which is necessary to address current and predicted increases to wildlife conflict and injury associated increased outdoor recreation. This decision package is directly aligned with the Action (ID#159) Develop, fund, and promote culturally relevant projects and programs to encourage and incentivize behavior changes that will protect, restore, and enable responsible enjoyment and stewardship of Puget Sound by implementing key opportunity Increase understanding of the connections between outdoor recreation and stewardship activities, by increasing *capacity for WDFW to engage the public in stewardship practices related to recreation and injured wildlife*. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by *increasing WDFW wildlife rehabilitation staff and facility capacity which is necessary to address current and predicted increases to wildlife conflict and injury associated with population growth and land development and part of the adaptive management process*.*

25. Building Salmon Team Capacity

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery by increasing WDFW’s capacity to support salmon recovery *through data-driven management decisions for salmonid populations and increasing capacity to coordinate across key management partners in the state including tribes*. This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID#206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring capacity to support informed decision making related to salmon recovery and harvest with a focus on management models and analyses related to chinook, coho, and other salmonids*. This decision packages fulfills the SECONDARY CRITERIA – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring WDFW program capacity to support salmon recovery through modeling and analysis of salmon populations that inform best management practices*.

This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 35 Conduct research, science and monitoring to inform decision-making, adaptive management and implementation of actions to recover Southern Residents *by ensuring capacity to support informed decision making related to salmon recovery and harvest with a focus on management models and analyses related to chinook, coho, and other salmonids, that will inform management of Southern Residents*. Through these efforts, this decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon strategy recommendation 8 Strengthen science, monitoring and accountability.

26. County and Other Assessments

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22: outdoor recreation and stewardship *by ensuring that land acquisition programs continue while benefiting fish and wildlife and providing public recreation such as hunting, fishing, bird watching, wildlife photography, hiking, and equestrian pursuits*. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by ensuring that land acquisition programs continue to support critical habitat for salmon recovery and ensure operations of hatcheries*. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring continued WDFW program capacity to acquire land to support wildlife, conservation, and public recreation needs*. Through these efforts, this package also indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 1 Significantly increase investment in restoration and acquisition of habitat in areas where Chinook stocks most benefit

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Southern Resident orcas and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 1 Protect and restore vital salmon habitat.

27. Fisheries Enforcement Compliance (old title: Additional enforcement officers)

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is directly aligned with Action (ID 206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by implementing two key opportunities: Improve public education and outreach; increasing funding for enforcement, and Reduce illegal fishing, *by increasing WDFW capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related to salmon harvest and addressing illegal fishing*. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 17 Responsible Boating and is directly aligned with Action (ID #68) Promote implementation of and compliance with laws and guidelines for boaters and vessels to protect Southern Resident Orcas by implementing key opportunity, Enforce and adaptively manage rules for boating around orca considering best available science and the results of marine spatial planning efforts; monitor and provide additional protection for vulnerable orca *by increasing WDFW capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related to responsible boating in Puget Sound, and for wildlife including orcas*.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 25 Economic Benefits *by ensuring that a thriving natural resource sector continues by increasing capacity for WDFW's capacity to enforce guidance and regulations on commercial and recreational fisheries*. This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Cultural practices and local foods and is indirectly aligned Action (ID #86) Increase number, accessibility, and protections for multi-use and multi-cultural natural spaces (for example, fish and shellfish harvesting, camping, boating, and gardening, etc.), including green spaces and waterways, *by increasing WDFW capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related marine fisheries and aquaculture*.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring continued WDFW program capacity to enforce existing guidance regulations related to commercial and recreational fisheries and responsible boating*. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce strategy recommendation 3 Apply and enforce laws that protect habitat *by increasing WDFW capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related to salmon harvest and other wildlife*. This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon strategy Recommendation 1 Protect and restore vital salmon habitat *by increasing WDFW's capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related to marine fisheries*.

28. Ongoing Essential Work

This decision package ensures full funding is provided for decision packages that were previously only provide one-time funding. This covers a diverse set of Puget Sound related ongoing programs that are implementing a number of 2022-2026 Action Agenda strategies.

The decision package components Fish Passage Rule Making and Prioritization of Fish Barriers is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers. The decision package directly implements 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers Action (ID#152) Inventory and assess all fish passage barriers (culverts, dams, etc.). Prioritize, sequence, and implement fish passage

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barrier correction or removal in watersheds *by supporting WDFW is the prioritization and sequencing of barriers.*

The decision package component Riparian Systems Assessment is aligned with 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 4 Riparian Areas. The decision package directly implements 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 4 Riparian Areas Action (ID#11) Establish and implement science-based riparian protection, restoration, and management policies that result in a minimum '1 Site Potential Tree Height' forested riparian area standard *by supporting WDFW in developing the data and analysis on riparian habitat management and policy choices.*

The decision package component Streamflow Policy Support is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 7: Freshwater Availability. This decision package directly implements the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 7: Freshwater Availability Action (ID #29) Understand and plan for future water needs and changing climate and ecosystem conditions by engaging all water users in a watershed to identify specific actions around water science, technology, management, and conservation *by ensuring WDFW policy and technical expertise engages in the proactive planning for how Washington will management and protect instream habitat and water levels under changing climate.*

The decision package components Salish Sea Marine Mammal Surveys, Increase Fish Populations (Hatchery Maintenance), and Salmon and Steelhead Monitoring is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery. The decision package directly implements 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery. It implements the Action (ID#204) Reduce displacement, competition, and predation of imperiled native species caused by native or invasive species *by conducting marine mammal surveys*; the Action (ID#205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by supporting hatchery maintenance; and the Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by supporting improved monitoring for in-season management.

This decision packages fulfills the second criteria– support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring key WDFW ongoing programs such as Fishery and Hatchery Science and Management continue to provide relevant science for natural resource management decisions.*

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant OTF Recommendation 8 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent *by ensuring funding for hatchery maintenance.* This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy Recommendation 3 Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to their historical habitat *by supporting the WDFW Fish Passage ongoing program in rule making and prioritization.* This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy Recommendation 6 Address predatory and food web issues for salmon *by funding Salish Sea Marine Mammal Surveys.*

29. Survey Flight Cost Increases

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This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 14: Invasive species and is directly aligned with Action (ID#46) Prevent and rapidly respond to the introduction and spread of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species, including green crab, predatory fish, and invasive plants by implementing key opportunity Use surveillance to detect invasive species and better understand pathways of introduction *by ensuring WDFWs capacity to monitor and address invasive plants in wildlife areas*. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is directly aligned with Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by implementing key opportunity, improve monitoring for in-season management *by ensuring WDFWs capacity to perform surveys of chinook spawning related to salmon recovery*. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts *by ensuring WDFWs capacity to restore or enhance game wildlife through animal capture and population monitoring (e.g., wolf, elk, mountain goat, bighorn sheep, and mule deer)*.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that WDFW can maintain aerial surveys and programs that support fish and wildlife protection*. This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 1 Significantly increase investment in restoration and acquisition of habitat in areas where Chinook stocks most benefit Southern Resident orcas *by supporting adaptive management of Chinook through spawning surveys*. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant SALMON STRATEGY recommendation 8 Strengthen science, monitoring and accountability *by supporting adaptive management of Chinook through spawning surveys and monitoring*.

30. Hatchery Fish Food Cost Increases

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring WDFWs ability to support salmon recovery through hatchery production of salmon and salmonids to meet tribal, commercial, and recreational fishery commitments*. Through these efforts this decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan, directly implements the Puget Sound relevant orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant salmon strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

31. Monitor Shellfish Harvest

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 25 Economic Benefits *by ensuring WDFW's Puget Sound Shellfish program capacity to support natural resource-based industries by increasing ability to monitor recreational and commercial shellfish harvests, monitor intertidal and*

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crustacean fisheries, address emerging environmental issues, build data management infrastructure, and develop a disease and pest management program to protect shellfish fisheries. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #96) Conduct and coordinate research to improve the understanding of ecosystem-industry interactions, opportunities, and benefits, by increasing WDFWs staff capacity to monitor, research, and provide science based analysis related to management of shellfish and crustacean fisheries. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #164) Support natural resource sector jobs and production opportunities by increasing WDFWs staff capacity to support natural resource jobs in commercial and recreational fisheries through increased management and safety

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods *by increasing WDFWs staff capacity to increasing access to safe and more abundant local food harvests, such as fish and shellfish, through increased management and monitoring capacity in addition to specific disease and pest response in the shellfish industry.* This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts *by increasing WDFWs capacity to monitor, support, and manage commercial and recreational shellfish and crustacean fisheries.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 14 Invasive Species and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #46) Prevent and rapidly respond to the introduction and spread of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species, including green crab, predatory fish, and invasive plants, *by increasing WDFWs staff capacity to monitor and respond to emerging diseases and pests in the commercial and recreational shellfish industries.*

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by maintaining WDFWs ability to manage commercial and recreational shellfish and crustacean harvests.*

32. Increased Pamphlet Costs

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship and is directly aligned with Action (ID #159) Develop, fund, and promote culturally relevant projects and programs to encourage and incentivize behavior changes that will protect, restore, and enable responsible enjoyment and stewardship of Puget Sound by implementing key opportunity Increase understanding of the connections between outdoor recreation and stewardship activities *by increasing WDFWs capacity to engage communities through recreation and stewardship, promoting and educating the public about fishing and hunting regulations, delivering to hunters and fishers customer service, and providing community awareness and stewardship of agency goals.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23: Good Governance *by maintaining WDFWs ability to provide materials and be transparent about fishing and hunting regulations to the public.* This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#198) Communications materials should be locally-relevant and clear and concise, avoiding jargon or overly technical language. Incorporate resources in various languages other than English for communications materials *by supporting increased trust and transparency with the public through printed materials of fishing and hunting regulations.*

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This decision packages fulfills the Secondary Criteria – support continuity, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 3 Apply and enforce laws that protect habitat *by maintaining WDFWs ability to provide the public information about fishing and hunting regulations despite increased shipping and printing costs.* This decision package indirectly implements the Salmon Strategy Recommendation 6 More effectively integrate salmon recovery into harvest, hatcheries and hydropower *by maintaining WDFWs ability to provide outreach about fishing and hunting regulations to the public including the Sport Fishing Rules pamphlet.*

33. Pro-Equity, Anti-Racism (PEAR)

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship through supporting WDFW in creating more equitable access to recreation and stewardship opportunities *by the implementation of the Washington State Pro-Equity Anti- Racism (PEAR) Plan and Playbook.* This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship Strategy through the Action (#ID160) Identify and fund removal of barriers resulting in the exclusion of people from participating in recreation and stewardship activities *by supporting WDFW in conducting environmental justice assessment tools and support for staff and project implementation to engage with underserved communities.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23 Good Governance *by supporting WDFW in implementing the HEAL Act and increasing the ability of WDFW to implement best practices for including vulnerable populations and underserved communities in decision making.* This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23 Good Governance through the Action (#162) Increase capacity for vulnerable populations and underserved communities to engage in environmental decision-making *by supporting WDFW in implement the key opportunity to implement the HEAL Act by developing the necessary WDFW policies, procedures, and engaging with partners in HEAL Act implementation.* This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23 Good Governance through the Action (#162) Increase capacity for vulnerable populations and underserved communities to engage in environmental decision-making *by implementing the key opportunity Increase practitioner and decision-maker understanding of vulnerable populations and underserved communities by providing support and data analysis to WDFW staff to improve environmental justice outcomes.*

34. Required Facilities GASB information

N/A

35. Reclassified IT positions

N/A

36. Contract and Purchasing Workload

N/A

37. Zooplankton Monitoring Program

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by continuing to implement a zooplankton monitoring*

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program that measures prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound and improves salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by supporting a zooplankton monitoring program that will inform adaptive management by assessing environmental changes and prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound, and improving salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management. Through these efforts, this decision package is directly aligned with Strategy 15 key opportunity to integrate climate change responses by ensuring sustainable support for monitoring efforts, for example, adult and juvenile migrant monitoring, intensively monitored watersheds, effectiveness of recovery actions, and population assessments accounting for different sources of mortality at different life-stages (freshwater to ocean conditions, etc.) that enable management decisions to be grounded in accurate assessments of current and projected future conditions. This includes continuing zooplankton monitoring, research and monitoring to ensure healthy forage fish populations, including herring, and advancing food web models (for example, the Atlantis Model).

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C research and monitoring *by continuing to implement a zooplankton monitoring program that measures prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound and improves salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#121) Direct and leverage funding and investments to advance science, monitoring, and adaptive management for Puget Sound recovery, by supporting a zooplankton monitoring program that will inform adaptive management by assessing environmental changes and prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound, and improving salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management. Through this work, this decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID#122) Coordinate efforts to assess and report on ecosystem conditions and the effectiveness of ecosystem recovery strategies and actions by implementing key opportunity Develop and apply innovative tools to understand ecosystem conditions as they change over time, and to predict and document those changes, ensure that reporting systems are piloted with partners (for example, LIOs), by supporting a collaborative zooplankton monitoring program among state, federal, academic, local, and tribal partners.*

This decision package implements the Priority Action 11 build upon recommendations of the Salish Sea Marine Survival Project to further define bottom-up and top-down food web effects on juvenile salmonid mortality in Puget Sound from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by *continuing to implement a zooplankton monitoring program that measures food web effects through prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound and improves salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management. This monitoring program was initiated by the Salish Sea Marine Survival Project when scientists determined that a leading hypothesis for the decline in Salish Sea-origin juvenile Chinook and coho marine survival is a change in food availability.*

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 16 Support the Puget Sound zooplankton sampling program as a Chinook and forage fish management tool and directly implements the Puget Sound relevant SALMON strategy Recommendations 6, Address predatory and food web issues for salmon and 8 Strengthen science, monitoring and accountability by *continuing to implement a zooplankton monitoring program that measures prey availability for juvenile*

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salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound and improves salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management.

Capital Budget Requests

38. Wallace River Hatchery - Redevelopment

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptative management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.* Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6, Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. This decision package is also directly aligned with Salmon Strategy recommendation 5, Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers *by ensuring that hatchery infrastructure are compliant with regulatory guidance for fish passage.* This decision packages also fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries.*

39. Toutle River Fish Collection Facility Upgrade

N/A not in Puget Sound

40. Beaver Creek Hatchery - Renovation to transition production from Grays River and decommission Grays River

N/A not in Puget Sound

41. Duckabush Estuary Habitat Restoration (PSNERP)

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 5 Floodplains and Estuaries *by supporting the Duckabush estuary restoration project to address impacts from fill, dikes, and road infrastructure, which block water channels and limit critical habitat for fish and wildlife, including endangered salmon species.* This decision package is directly aligned with the Action (ID #12) Increase the number and accelerate implementation of habitat acquisition and restoration projects as prioritized in salmon and watershed recovery plans, by implementing key opportunity, remove culverts and other barriers to connectivity to improve and maintain streamflow functions within floodplains and their associated estuaries, by elevating highway 101 and addressing or replacing four undersized culverts in

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the Duckabush estuary improving streamflow, and habitat connectivity. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #24) Implement habitat protection and restoration projects that restore or maintain natural nutrient attenuation functions and sediment processes in watersheds, estuaries, and tidal wetlands, *by implementing a restoration project in the Duckabush estuary that would improve restores estuarine biophysical and hydrological processes.*

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 6 Action (ID #152) Inventory and assess all fish passage barriers (culverts, dams, etc.). Prioritize, sequence, and implement fish passage barrier correction or removal in watersheds *by addressing fish passage barriers in Duckabush estuary by removing the existing blockages in the estuary (highway, fill, levees, bridges) as well as four undersized culverts and reconnecting historical channels.* This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 10 Stormwater Runoff and Legacy contamination *by supporting a large-scale wetland restoration project that will increase ecosystem services related to flooding, water quality, and contaminant abatement as habitat and associated hydrological processes improve.* This decision package is indirectly aligned Action (ID #3) Conduct watershed-scale planning and land use planning to protect and restore water quality *by supporting the Duckabush estuary restoration which will improve water quality management adding road run-off treatment to over 1600 feet of state highway as well as through improved estuarine ecosystem services such as increased vegetation filtering.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by restoring the Duckabush estuary habitat to increase favorable conditions for juvenile salmon as they pass through the estuary that allow them to feed, rest, and hide from predators, and increase their chances of survival. The Hood Canal summer chum recovery plan specifically notes that Hwy 101 earthen-fill causeways severely constrains the ecological function of the Duckabush estuary.* This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca, by implementing key opportunity, Implement habitat restoration efforts that expand available habitat and reduce competition *by implementing the Duckabush restoration project to expand and restore tidal wetland habitat that particularly supports juvenile salmon and their food webs.* Through these efforts, this package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #204) Reduce displacement, competition, and predation of imperiled native species caused by native or invasive species.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 20 Climate Adaptation and Resilience *by supporting a large-scale estuarine restoration project that will increase carbon sequestration and climate resilience through improved estuarine biophysical processes.* This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID #137) Implement multi-benefit projects and programs that synergistically advance Puget Sound recovery goals and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase carbon sequestration in Puget Sound ecosystems, increase climate adaptation, and promote climate resilience by implementing key opportunity Restore and acquire areas that provide flood conveyance, slow water, and deposit sediment during frequent, “ordinary” flood events *by reconnecting the floodplain by restoring functioning estuarine habitat to provide ecosystem services related to flooding, carbon sequestration, and other recovery goals including salmon.*

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This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship and Strategy 24 cultural practices and local foods *by improving habitat quality that supports fish and wildlife through restored estuarine habitat that will increase multi-use opportunities for recreation, stewardship, and cultural practices*. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts *by expanding and improving habitat quality and biophysical processes in Duckabush estuary to enhance native fish, game, and plant populations*.

This decision package is necessary to meet the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project target Secure funds to start the process-based restoration of 2,414 acres of Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Program identified nearshore habitat projects, in the 2022-2026 Action Agenda *by supporting a multi-agency effort to implement a PSNERP-identified and Congressionally authorized project to restore the diverse estuarine wetland habitat at the mouth of the Duckabush River*. A main component of the project is relocating US 101 onto a 1,600-foot-long estuary spanning bridge so that safe, dependable transportation connectivity to the Olympic Peninsula is maintained and compatible with the project's estuary restoration objectives such that the existing highway and infrastructure can be removed and estuarine processes restored. This step is a necessary precursor to restoring 2,100 acres of estuary over the next two decades.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria-Support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by ensuring the implementation of the science-based ongoing Puget Sound Nearshore Restoration Project through the Duckabush estuary restoration project to provide increased ecosystem services and habitat for critical fish and wildlife.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 1. Significantly increase investment in restoration and acquisition of habitat in areas where Chinook stocks most benefit Southern Resident orcas *by improving spawning and rearing habitat in the Duckabush River and estuary*. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 1 Protect and restore vital salmon habitat, and 2 Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to their historical habitat *by supporting the Duckabush estuary restoration project to address impacts from fill, dikes, and road infrastructure, which block water channels and limit critical habitat for fish and wildlife, including endangered salmon species*.

Implementation of the federally-authorized Project (3 estuary restoration sites across Puget Sound that includes Duckabush) is funded in a cost-share arrangement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) paying for 65% of the project costs and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife paying 35% of project costs. The state's share of the implementation costs will be a combination of state capital funds, work-in-kind credit, and credit for the value of the lands. *This decision package is necessary to secure new USACE Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration (Construction General) funding for Puget Sound through federal appropriations*. The Duckabush Estuary restoration site is the first of 3 project sites authorized by Congress in 2016 in the amount of \$452M.

42. SRKW - New Cowlitz River Hatchery

N/A not in Puget Sound

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43. SRKW - Sol Duc Hatchery Modifications

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptative management of co-managed fisheries. This specifically includes increase prey abundance for Southern Resident Killer Whales and to enhance fishing opportunities across tribes, recreational, and commercial fishers.* Through these efforts this decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca, and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries.*

44. Soos Creek Hatchery Renovation

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptative management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.* Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6, Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. This decision package is also directly aligned with Salmon Strategy recommendation 5, Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers *by ensuring that hatchery infrastructure are compliant with regulatory guidance for fish passage.* This decision packages also fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science

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Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries.*

45. Spokane Hatchery Renovation

N/A not in Puget Sound region

46. Forest Health – Hazard Fuel Reduction

N/A not in Puget Sound region

47. Minter Creek Hatchery - Replace Intake

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptative management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.* Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6, Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. This decision package is also directly aligned with Salmon Strategy recommendation 5, Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers *by ensuring that hatchery infrastructure are compliant with regulatory guidance for fish passage.* This decision packages also fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries.*

48. Samish Hatchery - Friday Creek Intake & Fish Passage

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptative management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.* Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6, Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. This

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decision package is also directly aligned with Salmon Strategy recommendation 5, Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers *by ensuring that hatchery infrastructure are compliant with regulatory guidance for fish passage*. This decision packages also fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries*.

49. Naselle Hatchery Renovation

N/A not in Puget Sound

50. Ringold Hatchery - Replace Ponds

N/A not in Puget Sound

51. Kalama Falls Hatchery - Replace Raceways & PA System

N/A not in Puget Sound

52. Fish and Wildlife Health and Biosecurity Facility

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by increasing WDFWs capacity to assess salmon and forage fish health and pathogen content from hatcheries and the wild to ensure sustainable harvest and recovery*. This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID #204) Reduce displacement, competition, and predation of imperiled native species caused by native or invasive species, by implementing key opportunity, continue and secure sustainable funding for pinniped population assessments and diet studies *by increasing WDFW's capacity to assess pinniped predation of salmon*.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 9 Water Pollution Source Identification and Correction and Strategy 12 Working Lands Runoff *by increasing WDFWs capacity to assess pathogens and contaminants related to Puget Sound recovery and management of whales, porpoises, seals, sea lions, sea otters, marine birds, shorebirds, turtles, frogs, bats, and other wildlife, and pathogens and contaminants that impact human health*. Through these efforts this decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #9) Fund, develop, and implement effective local and tribal nations pollution identification and correction (PIC) programs.

This decision package implements the priority action 9. Determine benefits to viability of Southern Resident Killer Whales from improved prey availability, and reduced disturbance and toxic chemical exposure; assess benefits individually and cumulatively through monitoring and modeling. from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by increasing WDFWs capacity to assess contaminants and other diseases within the SRKW food web to support adaptive management*.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce Recommendation 12 Direct the appropriate agencies to work with tribes and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to determine if pinniped (harbor seal and sea lion) predation is a limiting factor for

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Chinook in Puget Sound and along Washington's outer coast and evaluate potential management actions *by increasing WDFW's capacity to assess pinniped predation of salmon*. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce Recommendation 30 Identify, prioritize and take action on chemicals that impact orcas and their prey, and salmon strategy recommendation 6 Address predatory and food web issues for salmon *by increasing WDFW's capacity to assess contaminants and other diseases within the SRKW food web to support adaptive management*.

53. SRKW Palmer Ponds Expansion

N/A not in Puget Sound

54. SRKW Samish Hatchery Expansion and Adult Pond Renovation

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptative management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality*. Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6, Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. This decision package is also directly aligned with Salmon Strategy recommendation 5, Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers *by ensuring that hatchery infrastructure are compliant with regulatory guidance for fish passage*. This decision packages also fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries*.

55. Sol Duc Hatchery Intake Barrier and Boat Chute

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptative management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation & Stewardship by providing boat access for recreational opporunities in rural communities in Puget Sound.

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable

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harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptive management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptive management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptive management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.

56. Marblemount Hatchery - Renovation

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptive management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.* Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6, Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. This decision package is also directly aligned with Salmon Strategy recommendation 5, Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers *by ensuring that hatchery infrastructure are compliant with regulatory guidance for fish passage.* This decision packages also fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries.*

57. Hood Canal Shellfish Harvest Access Area

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship by restoring estuarine habitat that will increase multi-use opportunities for recreation and

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stewardship *by improving habitat quality that supports fish and wildlife*. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 cultural practices and local foods *by improving habitat quality that supports fish, wildlife, and vegetation important for food and cultural practices*. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 9 Water Pollution Source Identification & Correction *through potential actions such as partnering with Department of Health and local health jurisdictions on water quality improvements*.

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 22 Action (ID #160) Identify and fund removal of barriers resulting in the exclusion of people from participating in recreation and stewardship activities *by assessing equitable distribution of recreational opportunities and creating additional opportunities for shellfish harvest on Hood Canal*. This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Action (ID #91) Improve appropriate access opportunities for harvesting local foods and other culturally significant materials on public lands and shorelines *by assessing and identifying opportunities for acquisition of tidelines to increase shellfish harvest opportunity and access*. This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 24 Action (ID #89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts *by assessing and identifying opportunities for acquisition of tidelines to increase shellfish harvest opportunity and access*.

58. Wooten Wildlife Area

N/A not in Puget Sound

59. Cooperative Elk and Deer Fencing

N/A not in Puget Sound

60. Eells Spring Renovation

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship, and Strategy 24 cultural Practices and Local Foods, and Strategy 25 Economic Benefits, *by supporting rebuilding and restoring WDFW's capacity to produce hatchery raised trout necessary for recreation, fishing, and economic opportunities*. This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 24 Action (ID #89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts *by supporting WDFW's capacity to provide gamefish to 100 lakes in Mason, Jefferson, Kitsap, and Thurston counties*. This decision packages fulfills the secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by maintaining game fish production in western Washington*.

61. Region 1 office construct and storage

N/A, not in Puget Sound

62. Elochoman Hatchery – Facility abandonment

N/A not in Puget Sound

63. Forks Creek Hatchery - Renovate Intake and Diversion

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N/A not in Puget Sound

64. Mt. St. Helens WLA – Hoffstadt Hills Acquisition

N/A not in Puget Sound

65. Deschutes Watershed Center (Prog)

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by increasing WDFW's hatcheries capacity by building the Deschutes Watershed center to support increased culture and production of chinook salmon and salmonid species that support adaptive management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.* Through these efforts this decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries.*

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