

Summary Sheet

Meeting dates: June 14, 2019

Agenda item: 2019 Legislative Review--Briefing

Presenter(s): Nate Pamplin, Policy Director
Raquel Crosier, Legislative Director
Morgan Stinson, Budget

Background summary:

WDFW invested significant time preparing for the 2019 legislative session, primarily in response to a [2017 operating budget proviso](#) which directed the Department to conduct a [performance review](#), a [zero-based budget analysis](#), and develop a [long-term funding plan](#).

In September 2018, the Commission approved the Department's budget proposals for \$31M of at-risk/buyback decision packages, and \$28M of new enhancements (some of which included sustaining 2017-19 one-time investments). The Commission also approved two agency request bills: a recreational license fee increase and an adjustment to discounts for ADA customers.

In November, the Department worked with the Office of Financial Management and submitted budget proposals to implement the Governor's Southern Resident Killer Whale Task Force.

The Governor's budget was released in December 2018. He proposed funding for the at-risk/buyback items, a portion of our enhancements related to the fee bill, and significant new funding for killer whale conservation.

The legislature met for the 105-day session in 2019. The Department monitored and tracked over 500 bills over the course of the session. The agency's two pieces of request legislation, the fee bill and the ADA bill, did not pass, however, various legislative changes of interest to the department did get adopted. Staff will provide information on various bills of interest that passed during the 2019 session including; the three orca recovery bills, a couple predator management bills, legislation on high visibility clothing for hunting.

The legislature provided \$24M in one-time funding for the structural deficit, with the majority funded in the first fiscal year. The legislature also passed cost-of-living increases and adopted an efficiency reduction and with the failure of the fee bill, a number of enhancements that were essentially continuation of one-time activities in 2017-19 were also not fully funded. The Department received funding for killer whale recovery and received a very positive capital budget.

All told, the Department is facing a \$20M shortfall in the 2019-21 biennium operating budget. Staff will review the approach the Department is taking to balance the budget in the first fiscal year, as a continuation from the Commission's conference call on May 31, 2019. The Commission will discuss the 2020 supplemental approach in agenda item #14.

Staff recommendation: N/A

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome: N/A

Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

Public involvement process used and what you learned: N/A

Action requested and/or proposed next steps: N/A

Draft motion language:

N/A

Post decision communications plan: N/A