

**Exhibit D**  
**State Wildlife Action Plan Approval**

**Amended Attachment 1**  
**Agenda Item Summary**  
**August 15, 2025**

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**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**  
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## AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

### BACKGROUND

This agenda item requests the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission's approval of Oregon's State Wildlife Action Plan for submission to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) is a blueprint for conservation in Oregon. The SWAP brings together the best available information and presents recommended conservation actions to inform and prioritize conservation work for citizens, private landowners, organizations, and agencies alike.

As a condition of funding through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program, each state and territory must submit a revised SWAP at an interval of no greater than ten years. The SWAP was initially drafted and published in 2006 under the name of the Oregon Conservation Strategy, updated in 2016, and is currently being updated for the third iteration. The final, revised SWAP is due to USFWS on Oct 1, 2025. Following submission, USFWS will develop a technical review team that will make an approval decision on the revision in 2026.

The SWAP is organized into sections that start broad at the state level and narrow in focus to the species level. Each section provides information to support understanding of conservation concerns in the state by a broad audience. To facilitate accessibility, the SWAP is included as nine attachments:

#### **Attachment 3a: Overview**

**Attachment 3b: Key Conservation Issues (KCI)**s are landscape-scale threats that impact species and habitats throughout the entire state. Each KCI provides an overview of the threat and the recommended conservation goals and actions needed to address them.

**Attachment 3c: Ecoregions** are geographic areas of the state with similar climate and vegetation. General characteristics, limiting factors, and recommended conservation actions are described for each of the nine ecoregions in Oregon.

**Attachment 3d: Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs)** help focus conservation efforts and financial investments in specific areas to increase the likelihood of long-term success over larger landscapes.

**Attachment 3e: Key Habitats** are native habitats of conservation concern that are essential to many Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) within the state. Each Key Habitat includes a general description, conservation overview, and a list of limiting factors and recommended conservation actions.

**Attachment 3f: Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN**, previously Strategy Species) include wildlife, fish, invertebrates, plants, and algae. This section also takes a broader view of fish and wildlife conservation and includes information on naturally occurring fish and wildlife diseases and animal concentrations.

**Attachment 3g: Species of Greatest Conservation Need and Species of Greatest Information Need (SGIN) spreadsheet** includes information on the special needs, limiting factors, data gaps, conservation actions, and available resources for each of Oregon's SGCN and presents SGIN, which are species that require more information to determine whether they should be elevated to SGCN status.

**Attachment 3h: Monitoring** includes information and guidance on monitoring strategies, community science, and recommendations for data management for SGCN and Key Habitats statewide.

**Attachment 3i: The Conservation Toolbox** provides information and resources for all Oregonians on how to engage in conservation action as individuals or groups. The Toolbox identifies goals for agencies and other organizations to use outreach and education to support and encourage individual Oregonians to take conservation action.

Major updates in the third iteration include the addition of Pollution as a new Key Conservation Issue (KCI), changes to naming structures to match national terminology, and complete integration of the Oregon Nearshore Strategy (ONS) and the Oregon Conservation Strategy in recognition of the need to present consolidated information on all ecosystems. Additionally, all components of the SWAP were re-evaluated and updated with the latest information, including a full assessment of the status of all sensitive, at-risk, or declining species or other species of concern. Oregon's Conservation Opportunity Areas were revised to incorporate updated, new, and finer resolution spatial data and the Conservation Toolbox was restructured to empower all Oregonians to take conservation actions.

## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The department approached public engagement with two distinct goals:

1. Ensure that anyone with technical knowledge and interest in the content of the SWAP had the opportunity to contribute information and expertise in the development of the SWAP content to ensure the SWAP consisted of high quality information to guide conservation in Oregon.
2. Raise awareness about the biodiversity crisis, reach new audiences, and firmly establish in the public eyes that there is an immediate and critical need for Oregon to take action to protect its native species.

The department began revision of the SWAP in July of 2023, reaching out to partner groups and the public to get feedback on how they use the SWAP and areas in need of focus for the revision. Feedback from the public, partners, and department staff were incorporated into draft revised content in 2024 that was presented for technical and public review in a series of 16 topically focused public facing meetings in the first half of 2025. The department maintains a SWAP revision email notification list with over 2,500 interested parties. The department maintains a

SWAP revision website with meeting notifications, recordings of all meetings, draft content, feedback forms, and contact information. To expand involvement of partners, direct outreach and one-on-one interviews were conducted to enhance content of the Conservation Toolbox and make it more relevant to all Oregonians. Content presented to the Commission reflects comments and consideration from staff and partner technical review and public outreach through July of 2025.

Recognizing that the fish, wildlife, and habitats of Oregon are shared resources of great importance to all residents, the department wanted to ensure that questions, concerns, and interests of tribal co-managers in regard to the State Wildlife Action Plan were addressed during the 10-year revision. Early in the process, the department conducted outreach at the Native American Fish and Wildlife Association Pacific Northwest Regional Conference. In the spring of 2024, the department sent letters to all federally recognized tribes in Oregon, inviting participation in a collaborative process to complete the revision. Department staff also reached out directly to both tribal natural resources and cultural resources managers to seek their feedback at several points throughout the revision process.

In recognition that participating in discussion during traditional public meetings may be intimidating for individuals new to processes like these, the revision team worked to provide multiple avenues for participation to supplement the traditional process. All meetings were recorded and hosted on a YouTube channel to increase accessibility to the technical review process, which by August 2025 cumulatively had over 1600 views.

To reach the department's second goal of public engagement, the department promoted the revision process and the species of greatest conservation need through events, social media, press releases, and presentations across the state. An innovative public outreach campaign, *Oregon is Worth Protecting*, was run in parallel to the revision process to raise awareness about the biodiversity crisis, reach new audiences, and firmly establish in the public eyes that there is an immediate and critical need for Oregon to take action to protect its native species. The campaign highlights multiple species of greatest conservation need and shares engaging facts about the species. It directs viewers to [OregonIsWorthProtecting.com](https://OregonIsWorthProtecting.com), which contains non-technical information about the species and links to the SWAP for more information.

In anticipation of the Commission review of the SWAP, the department published the final draft for public comment on July 11, 2025. The department considered comments submitted by July 31 and incorporated them into the final version which was published for Commission review and additional public comment on August 6. Additionally, the public has an opportunity to provide comment prior to (in writing) or (orally) during the hearing that occurs at the Commission meeting.

## ISSUE 1

Approve the Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan content for submission to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

## ANALYSIS

The department seeks approval from the Commission for the submission of the core content of the State Wildlife Action Plan to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The SWAP emphasizes proactive, voluntary conservation of declining species and habitats to reduce the possibility of future federal or state listings. While not a regulatory document, it outlines key issues, opportunities, and recommended voluntary actions to improve the effectiveness of conservation across Oregon. It fosters a shared understanding of the challenges facing the state's fish and wildlife by all Oregonians and sets common priorities for addressing these needs.

The content of SWAP, once approved by the USFWS, will be fully web-enabled and accessible online (current iteration hosted at the [OregonConservationStrategy.org](http://OregonConservationStrategy.org)) to ensure that content is navigable and can link users out to additional resources and partner websites. Outside of the USFWS' formal revision process through either a Major or Minor Revision, core components of the SWAP that meet the USFWS' eight required elements (including species, habitats, threats, and conservation actions) must remain static. In summary, those elements include:

- 1) Information on the distribution and abundance of wildlife,
- 2) Descriptions of locations and relative condition of key habitats,
- 3) Descriptions of problems that may adversely affect species (identified in #1) or their habitats,
- 4) Conservation actions proposed to conserve identified species and their habitats,
- 5) Proposed plans for monitoring identified species, their habitats, and conservation actions,
- 6) Procedures to review the plan,
- 7) Plans for review and revision of the plans with partners, and
- 8) Description of public participation.

However, much can change over the course of ten years, and it is important to provide up-to-date resources, links, references, and highlights as much as is feasible especially within the online context where resources are assumed to be current. Department staff worked with the USFWS to identify opportunities to provide flexibility. Core content presented to the Commission will remain static over the next 10 years unless the department undergoes a formal revision process. Additional supporting information, including specific Actions by Individuals, spotlights, links, resources, and COA profiles hosted on the website may be updated outside of the formal revision process.

The SWAP is a condition of funding through the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program and must be revised every 10 years. It serves to direct department work on sensitive, threatened, and endangered species to prevent or reverse declines in these species

For the 2025 revision, the SGCN criteria used to assess species were standardized across taxa to ensure consistency among taxonomic groups and that the list of SGCN represented the species most at-risk in the state. Broadly, these four criteria were:

- 1) The species was vulnerable to potential threats due to life history traits or ecological characteristics of the species
- 2) Species' population size or number of occurrences was low or declining, indicating risk of extirpation or loss of population viability
- 3) The species is at-risk because of a restricted distribution

4) Population impacted by major threats, e.g. invasive species, climate change, disease

Species assessed under the revised criteria were native, regularly occurring, and were of elevated conservation concern due to their status on one or more lists (e.g. IUCN red list, federal-listing status, NatureServe ranks), professional opinion, or public comment recommending staff review the status of the species. Species selected for inclusion as an SGCN met at least 2 of 4 criteria. During the revision, ODFW staff assessed well over 600 species and species groups for inclusion as SGCN. Eighty-five species were added as SGCN, 32 species that were previously identified as SGCN were moved to SGIN, and 28 species were removed. See Attachment 3f for complete details on SGCN criteria, the selection process, and outcomes.

Changes to SGCN from 2016								
	Amphibian	Bird	Fish	Invertebrate	Mammal	Plant	Reptile	Total
SGCN Added	1	12	14	32	5	17	4	<b>85</b>
SGCN to SGIN		3	9	17	3			<b>32</b>
SGCN Removed		6	14	5	2		1	<b>28</b>

Some species previously included as “Strategy Species” in the Oregon Conservation Strategy did not meet the standardized criteria for inclusion as an SGCN in the SWAP (e.g. acorn woodpecker, purple sea urchin). Other changes in SGCN status represent recovery (e.g. peregrine falcon), new information describing vulnerability or population trends (e.g. North American porcupine, Crater Lake (Mazama) newt), or increased uncertainty regarding population status (e.g. upland sandpiper).

Additional key changes made during the revision include:

- All KCIs were revised with updated information and a new KCI, Pollution, was added. Content from “Challenges and Opportunities for Private Landowners” was moved from KCIs to the Conservation Toolbox, and threats identified in the 2016 ONS were integrated into KCIs.
- Updates to Key Habitats included revised information on threats and conservation actions for each habitat, with specific emphasis on the role of American beaver and beaver-modified habitats in wetlands and riparian areas. No new Key Habitat types were added, as existing categories remain inclusive and relevant. However, the five habitat types in the Nearshore ecoregion are now presented collectively as the 12th Key Habitat, Nearshore Habitats.
- Ecoregion profiles were revised to ensure that all the information provided is up-to-date and relevant and ecoregion-specific information on climate change was added.
- Conservation Opportunity Areas were reviewed and revised, incorporating updated data describing costs (i.e., threats) and conservation targets (e.g., climate refugia).
- Finally, the Conservation Toolbox was completely restructured with a focus on empowering all Oregonians to take conservation actions.

## OPTIONS

1. Approve the department's approach to addressing the eight (8) required elements of the State Wildlife Action Plan for submission to the USFWS to meet the October 1 deadline.
2. Modify core content.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION: ISSUE 1

Option 1. Approve the department's approach to addressing the eight (8) required elements of the State Wildlife Action Plan for submission to the USFWS to meet the October 1 deadline.

**DRAFT MOTION:** I move to approve the department's approach to addressing the eight (8) required elements of the Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan as described in Attachments 1, 3 and 4 for submission to the US Fish and Wildlife Service with the understanding that department staff will finalize the content and make any changes necessary to transition to a web-based format.

**Effective Date:** *August 15, 2025*