



State of Washington  
**DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 43200, Olympia, WA 98504-3200 • (360) 902-2200 • TDD (360) 902-2207  
Main Office Location: Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington Street SE, Olympia, WA

July 30, 2021

The Honorable Christine Rolfes  
Chair, Senate Ways and Means  
303 John A. Cherberg Building  
Post Office Box 40466  
Olympia, WA 98504-0466

The Honorable Timm Ormsby  
Chair, House Appropriations  
315 John L. O'Brien Building  
Post Office Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

The Honorable Steve Hobbs  
Chair, Senate Transportation  
305 John A. Cherberg Building  
Post Office Box 40444  
Olympia, WA 98504-0466

The Honorable Jake Fey  
Chair, House Transportation  
415 John L. O'Brien Building  
Post Office Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

The Honorable Steve Tharinger  
Chair, House Capital Budget  
314 John L. O'Brien Building  
Post Office Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Dear Chairpersons, Rolfes, Hobbs, Ormsby, Fey, and Tharinger:

I am writing to provide you with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and the Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board's (FBRB) biennial update to the legislature regarding the development of a statewide culvert remediation plan for all culvert correction programs. WDFW, WSDOT, and the FBRB were tasked in 2020 Supplemental Capital, Operating and Transportation Budget provisos to develop a comprehensive statewide strategy, focusing the efforts of all culvert correction programs into a single strategic approach to maximize the salmon and orca recovery benefits from the public investment. The comprehensive strategy is to guide the funding recommendations of the FBRB, as well as other state fish passage barrier correction programs. Existing staff have worked on the proviso, while accommodating pandemic-mandated furloughs, competing teamwork priorities due to vacancies, and the unavailability of contractors to assist. This biennial report summarizes the significant work that was done, despite such challenges.

At the end of this report there are several recommendations to strengthen existing aspects of a statewide strategy, as well as enable prioritization of barrier removal at finer scales within watersheds and between stream systems.

WDFW will continue developing the comprehensive statewide fish passage barrier remediation plan and will identify or seek the resources to do the work described in the recommendations.

- The state should affirm what's working among the current approaches to barrier removal and continue utilizing these practices in a statewide strategy moving forward.
- WDFW should complete work to enable statewide prioritization at the barrier and stream system scales that reflects access to the conditions fish need and for the populations that matter most to recovery.
- With statewide prioritization in hand, WDFW and state barrier removal programs should enhance the infrastructure and funding to enable more proactive promotion of these priorities.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this report update to the legislature, please feel free to contact Tom McBride, WDFW's Legislative Director, at (360)480-1472.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom P. Jameson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "T" and "J".

Tom Jameson  
Chair, Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board