

Idaho Governor's Office of Species Conservation

Strategic Plan

FY 2020-2023

Brad Little, Governor
Scott Pugrud, Administrator

Our Mission

The Governor's Office of Species Conservation is dedicated to planning, coordinating, and implementing the State's actions to conserve and recover species listed as threatened, endangered, or candidate under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). This work is done in coordination with the States' natural resource agencies and with the input of the citizens of Idaho, while taking into consideration the economic vitality of the State.

Our Vision

The Governor's Office of Species Conservation seeks to proactively provide leadership and guidance for constituents including state, federal, and private stakeholders seeking assistance with the conservation of rare and declining species, and recovery and delisting of threatened, endangered, and candidate species under the ESA.

Our Goals

Goal #1: Create and implement State policy among a diverse set of stakeholders to address issues related to federal ESA programs.

Objective 1: Schedule, facilitate, and support at least 6 meetings of the Governor's Salmon Working Group and provide a policy recommendation to the Governor by Spring/Summer of 2020.

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23
Number of meetings held	6-12	NA	NA	NA
Explanation				
Aligns with goal of creating policy among diverse stakeholders to address ESA issues. Governor's Salmon Working Group is expected to conclude in 2020.				

Objective 2: Coordinate state agencies to provide comments on the United States Forest Service (USFS) Salmon-Challis Forest Plan Revision.

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY23
Provide timely comments on behalf of the State of Idaho to the Salmon-Challis	100%	100%	NA	NA

Forest Plan Revision NEPA process.				
Explanation				
Input is received by state agencies and constituents regarding the forest planning process. OSC compiles these comments and submits final comments to the USFS. The Forest Plan Revision process is expected to be completed spring/summer 2021.				

Objective 3: Coordinate and provide comments on NEPA planning and project documents that relate to ESA species and impact the citizens of the state of Idaho.

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23
Provide comments on project proposals and policy documents.	15	15	17	20
Explanation				
OSC will coordinate with other state agencies on NEPA documents as they relate to ESA species by analyzing current science and feedback from constituents and other stakeholders regarding each NEPA project or policy document.				

Goal #2: Negotiate agreements with federal natural resource agencies that rely upon science and common sense, involve all parties affected by ESA decisions, and incorporate Idaho’s economic vitality and values into the decision-making processes.

Objective 1: Complete the Mitigation Principles document for compensatory mitigation regarding large scale anthropogenic disturbance in the sage-grouse Habitat Management Areas in Idaho.

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23
Complete Mitigation Principles document for sage-grouse and incorporate it into the federal (BLM and USFS) mitigation scheme for Idaho by October 1, 2019.	1	NA	NA	NA

Explanation

OSC will complete the Mitigation Principles document for sage-grouse mitigation and present it to the Governor for his consideration. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be negotiated and entered into between the State of Idaho, USFS, and BLM that recognizes the no net loss process and the Technical and Policy Teams. The Mitigation Framework development should conclude before end of 2019

Objective 2: Work with USFWS and IDFG on northern Idaho ground squirrel (NIDGS) Species Status Assessment (SSA)

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23
Participate in the USFWS process to complete the SSA for NIDGS	1 SSA	NA	NA	NA
Explanation				
OSC will work with IDFG and USFWS as they conduct an SSA for the NIDGS to be incorporated into the upcoming recovery plan. The SSA should be complete in FY 2020.				

Objective 3: Coordinate amongst state agencies the State’s comments on the Columbia River Systems Operations EIS

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23
Provide technical feedback and content ¹	6	2	NA	NA
Participate in conference calls ²	60	20	NA	NA
Provide comments via spreadsheet ledger ³	100%	100%	NA	NA
Coordinate the State’s comments on the administrative draft of the EIS within the designated comment period. ⁴	100%	100%	NA	NA
Explanation				
¹ This is the anticipated number of meetings to be held on the Columbia River Basin EIS and OSC wishes to make 100% of these meetings. ² Biweekly conference calls of anadromous, resident, and wildlife teams; coordination with other MOU parties on socio-economic, hydrology, hydraulics, and water quality teams.				

³Technical team leads provide products ranging from conceptual ecological models to narrative and request input as products become available.

⁴In February 2020 it is anticipated that the Action Agencies will release the Administrative Draft of the CRSO EIS and OSC will produce and coordinate comments on behalf of the State of Idaho per the MOU.

Objective 4: Meet with IDFG to coordinate management, recovery, and delisting efforts of threatened and endangered species.

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23
Meet with IDFG Leadership	3 meetings	3 meetings	3 meetings	3 meetings
Explanation				
Work with IDFG as wildlife manager to identify a path forward through ESA Section 4(d) or a petition to delist threatened and endangered species under the ESA.				

Goal #3: Solicit funding resources and allocate funds to further OSC’s mission with an emphasis on transparency and accountability.

Objective 1: Secure PCSRF Grant and Distribute PCSRF Funds

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23
Complete and submit annual grant application to NOAA ¹	1	1	1	1
Accept PCSRF Award ²	\$5.25 million	\$5.25 million	\$5.5 million	\$5.75 million
Hold PCSRF Board Meeting to award funding ³	2	2	2	2
Conduct project site visits	20	20	25	25
Conduct Subrecipient Monitoring	6	6	8	8
Explanation				
¹ Application is reviewed and scored for technical merit and awards are made by NOAA ² PCSRF is a competitive award process. OSC hopes to increase award amount by making Idaho more competitive by administering a successful program ³ Boards hears proposals and makes funding decisions directing OSC with any conditions and sets funding levels of projects. 2 annual meetings should be sufficient to award new grant money and any grant money left over from previous years. ⁴ Estimated site visits between Boise, Moscow, and Salmon Staff. Site visits help ensure that projects are meeting their goals and in compliance with state and federal requirements ⁵ Monitoring based on sub-recipient risk evaluation ensures program compliance				

Objective 2: Idaho Fish Accord Administration

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measures	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23
Renew annual intergovernmental agreements contained in the Idaho Fish Accord with BPA. ¹	20	20	20	20
Meet with IDFG on Fish Accord funding levels of projects within the Idaho Portfolio. ²	4	4	4	4
Receive and approve progress and annual reports from contractors. ³	40	40	45	45
Attend Salmon and Clearwater Technical Team Meetings ⁴	12	12	12	12
Project Oversight field visits	200	200	200	200
Explanation				
<p>¹ OSC co-manages a suite of approximately 20 BPA funded projects with IDFG known as the Idaho Portfolio. Each project has a contract that has a variable renewal date.</p> <p>² OSC and IDFG have the ability to move funds, reserve funds, or pre-fund projects by coordinating with BPA COTRs on their co-managed BPA funded projects.</p> <p>³ This includes technical reports and project tracking within PIECES.</p> <p>⁴ Monthly meeting of the technical teams to conceptualize, prioritize, future projects; rank proposed projects; monitor the progression of funded projects. Provides technical ranking to the PCSRF Board and BPA Staff.</p> <p>⁵ Boise, Moscow and salmon staff conduct regular project implementation visits to ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal rules as well as ensure project deliverable are being realized and all work is conducted in a safe manner.</p>				

Objective 3: Secure US Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) Funding to continue salmon recovery projects.

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23
Apply or renew funding instruments with BOR. ¹	2	2	2	2
Conduct field visits and review protocols ²	6	6	6	6

Meet with relevant contractors and staff to ensure projects are meeting goals and objectives.	12	12	12	12
Contribute to and review annual reports. ³	1+	1+	1+	1+
Meet to review budget, drawdown logs, and work with BOR and contractor to ensure deliverables are produced within time and budget limitations. ⁴	8	8	8	8
Explanation				
<p>¹ Application is reviewed and scored for technical merit and awards are made by BOR. OSC currently has two BPA funded projects including: Upper Salmon Integrated Rehabilitation Assessment and Multiple Reach Assessments and Radio Fish Tracking in the Upper Salmon Basin.</p> <p>² Observe project data, equipment, and sites to ensure scientific integrity and workplace safety.</p> <p>³ Report to BOR annual results on the timing and movement of juvenile salmonids in the Upper Salmon River.</p> <p>⁴ Basic project/budget oversight and coordination.</p>				

Objective 4: Convene the Sage-grouse Actions Team to evaluate projects and allocate funding to the most beneficial projects.

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23
Grant dollars awarded, obligated, or spent annually by June 1. ¹	\$600,000	\$650,000	\$675,000	\$700,000
Conduct field visits and evaluate projects. ²	5	7	9	11
Provide annual reports. ³	2	2	2	2
Receive and approve progress and annual reports from successful applicants. ⁴	10	11	12	13
Explanation				

- ¹ The legislature appropriates general fund dollars for implementation of the Idaho plan and the federal government awards grant funding to OSC for sage-grouse projects. Each year these dollars will be allocated to funding of sagebrush steppe habitat restoration and rehabilitation projects and spent or obligated by June 1 of that FY.
- ² OSC will conduct a certain number of field visits on a subset of projects each year for program and project evaluation in meeting their goals and objectives.
- ³ The USFWS and the BLM require annual reports regarding the federal funds they have granted OSC.
- ⁴ A final and a 2-year report must be completed for each project and approved by OSC.

Objective 5: Secure compensation funding for livestock producers who have incurred losses due to wolves.

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23
Apply for and secure Compensation Grant Funds. ¹	1	1	1	1
Provide annual reports. ²	1	1	1	1
Explanation				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> ¹ OSC applied for \$150,000 in compensation dollars through USFWS in 2018/2019, there is a chance of the full ask amount being reduced. If funded OSC would distribute the necessary funding from USFWS to producers who have verified depredations and that complete the compensation application. ² The USFWS require annual reports regarding the federal funds they have granted OSC. 				

Goal #4: Unsurpassed constituent services for State, federal and private stakeholders seeking assistance with ESA issues.

Objective 1: OSC will increase the efficiency of its contract administration process.

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23
% of invoices signed and processed within 30 days of OSC receiving them.	100%	100%	100%	100%
Explanation				
OSC receives payment invoices that must be coded, signed by the administrator and processed by fiscal for ESA projects. 30 days for processing invoices is an industry standard, OSC will strive to process invoices as quickly, accurately and transparently as possible. This is an internal target to increase efficiency.				

Objective 2: Annually increase efficiency of PCSRF award process

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23
Complete and send Award Letters within 14 days of PCSRF Board Meeting ¹	90%	95%	100%	100%
Enter into contracts for projects awarded by PCSRF Board within 60 days PCSRF Board meeting ²	80%	85%	90%	95%
Attend NOAA Grants Workshop ³	1	1	1	1
Explanation				
<p>¹Steadily increases our efficiency and improves our overall constituent services</p> <p>²Working with project managers to increase efficiency of entering into contracts will increase overall constituent service</p> <p>³Attendance ensures that OSC stays up to date on NOAA Grant requirements and developments so that we may continue to administer our PCSRF program efficiently</p>				

Objective 3: Annually increase efficiency of Terrestrial species grant award and contract process

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 20	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23
Complete and send Award Letters within 14 days of Actions Team Board Meeting ¹	90%	95%	100%	100%
Enter into contracts for recommended projects within 60 days of the Actions Team Board meeting ²	80%	85%	90%	95%
Make payments within 30 days of the application deadline. ³	80%	85%	90%	95%
Explanation				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Steadily increase our efficiency and improve our overall constituent services through the Sage Grouse Actions Team. 2. Increase efficiency of entering into Sage Grouse Actions Team contracts, this will increase overall constituent service. 3. Make payments to livestock producers within 30 days of the application deadline, December 31st, this will increase overall constituent service. 				

External Factors

Endangered Species Priorities

ESA species issues tend to have fluctuating priorities. A species and/or habitat issue receiving a lot of focus at one moment may suddenly become a lesser priority depending upon the biological, social, legal, political or cultural ramifications of current events, petitions or litigation. State agencies must be flexible to adapt to those shifts in priorities as they occur.

Unpredictable Federal Funding

Shrinking federal dollars and competing programs result in significant funding uncertainties for State agencies. Priorities and action plans must have a level of flexibility built in so that State agencies can adjust their focus if the funding for a particular species and/or habitat issue “dries up.”

Environmental Unpredictability

Unforeseen environmental events (i.e. catastrophic wildfire or major flooding events) resulting in significant impacts to either species or habitats has the potential to affect how State agencies prioritize work plans and spending.

Adoption of the NIST Cybersecurity Framework and Implementation of CIS Critical Security Controls 1 – 5

As a technology customer of the Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) in the Governor’s Office, we are using the cybersecurity systems and technical expertise in ITS to fulfill requirements related to Executive Order 2017-02. Staff from ITS briefed the NIST Core Framework, CIS Controls 1-5, and their plan for adoption of the NIST Cybersecurity Framework. We participate in DHR and ITS administered cybersecurity training, as awareness is a critical component of an effective cybersecurity program. As briefed by ITS staff, implementation of the CIS Controls 1-5 will be their responsibility for the systems they operate and, as technological tools applied to the computer systems, largely invisible to us as a customer. ITS, working through the multi-agency Incident Response Task force, has developed an Incident Response Program in support of our agency.

Red Tape Reduction Act

OSC is not a regulatory agency and therefore has no administrative code to review.