

Idaho Governor's Office of Species Conservation

Strategic Plan

FY 2021-2024

Brad Little, Governor
Mike Edmondson, Interim 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: Facilitate and support the remaining meetings of the Governor's Salmon Workgroup and assist in compiling their final policy recommendations into a single report for the Governor by December 31, 2020.

Assigned Party: Administrator, Aquatic Species Program

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23	Benchmark FY 24
Final Report Delivered	1	NA	NA	NA
Explanation				
The remaining meetings have been scheduled and the Workgroup has begun to develop policy recommendations. As support for the Salmon Workgroup, OSC would like to aid them in compiling the recommendations into a single report by the intended deadline of December 2020.				

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

Assigned Party: Terrestrial Species Program

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23	Benchmark FY24

Commenting on behalf of the State of Idaho regarding Land Management and Forest Plan Amendments/Revisions that have an ESA nexus. – meeting BLM and USFS commenting deadlines	100%	100%	NA	NA
Explanation				
Input is received by state agencies and constituents regarding the land use and forest planning process for an amendment. OSC compiles these comments and submits final comments to the USFS and BLM.				

Objective 3: Coordinate and provide comments on project proposals and policy documents that have the potential to impact ESA species and citizens of the state of Idaho.

Assigned Party: Aquatic and Terrestrial Species Program

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23	Benchmark FY 24
Providing comments on project proposals and policy documents – comment letters	17	17	20	22
Explanation				
OSC develops the state’s viewpoint regarding ESA species by analyzing current science and feedback from constituents and other stakeholders regarding each project or policy document (NEPA).				

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

Assigned Party: Terrestrial Species Program

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23	Benchmark FY 24

Participate in the USFWS process to complete the SSA for NIDGS	1 SSA	NA	NA
Explanation			
USFWS is conducting an SSA on the NIDGS to be incorporated into the upcoming recovery plan. Due to the uncertainty of federal timelines the SSA should be complete between FY 21 and FY22.			

Objective 2: Columbia River Systems Operations

Assigned Party: Aquatic Species Program

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23	Benchmark FY 24
Attend meetings ¹	60	20	10	10
Participate in conference calls ²	80	10	5	5
Provide comments via spreadsheet ledger ³	100%	100%	NA	NA
Provide comments on administrative draft of the EIS within the ⁴ 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 Operations 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. ³ Technical team leads provide products ranging from conceptual ecological models to narrative and request input as products become available. ⁴ In 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 3: Meet with IDFG to coordinate management, recovery, and delisting efforts of threatened and endangered species.

Assigned Party: Administrator, Aquatic Species Program, Terrestrial Program

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23	Benchmark FY 24
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

Assigned Party: Aquatic Species Program

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23	Benchmark FY 24
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	25	25	25
Conduct Subrecipient Monitoring	6	8	8	8
Explanation				
<p>¹ Application is reviewed and scored for technical merit and awards are made by NOAA</p> <p>² PCSRF is a competitive award process. OSC hopes to increase award amount by making Idaho more competitive by administering a successful program</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p> <p>⁵ Monitoring based on sub-recipient risk evaluation ensures program compliance</p>				

Objective 2: Idaho Fish Accord Administration

Assigned Party: Aquatic Species Program

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measures	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23	Benchmark FY 24
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	45	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.

Assigned Party: Aquatic Species Program

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23	Benchmark FY 24
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	8	8	8	8

produced within time and budget limitations. ⁴				
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: Work through the Sage-grouse Actions Team to evaluate projects and allocate funding to the most beneficial projects.

Assigned Party: Terrestrial Species Program

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23	Benchmark FY 24
Dollars awarded, obligated or spent annually by June 1. ¹	\$500,000	\$510,000	\$520,000	\$550,000
Conduct field visits and evaluate projects. ²	1	2	2	3
Provide annual reports. ³	2	2	2	2
Explanation				
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>³ The USFWS and the BLM require annual reports regarding the federal funds they have granted OSC.</p>				

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

Assigned Party: Terrestrial Species Program

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23	Benchmark FY 24
Apply for Compensation Grant Funds. ¹	1	1	1	1
Provide annual reports. ²	1	1	1	1

Compensate producers that meet the funding requirements for livestock loss due to wolves (Claims/Awarded/Amount)				
Explanation				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OSC applies for compensation dollars through USFWS each fall. If the agreement is 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. 3. This is meant to be informational regarding the # of claims /contracts awarded and the overall amount allocated in that fiscal year. This will fluctuate depending on wolf activity. 				

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.

Assigned Party: Terrestrial and Aquatic Species Program

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23	Benchmark FY 24
% of invoices signed and processed within 30 days of OSC receiving them.	90%	95%	95%	100%
Explanation				
OSC receives payment invoices that must be coded, signed by the administrator and processed by fiscal for ESA projects. This is an internal target to increase efficiency.				

Objective 2: Annually increase efficiency of PCSRF award process

Assigned Party: Aquatic Species Program

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23	Benchmark FY 24
Complete and send Award Letters within 14 days of PCSRF Board Meeting ¹	90%	95%	95%	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

- ¹Steadily increases our efficiency and improves our overall constituent services
- ²Working with project managers to increase efficiency of entering into contracts will increase overall constituent service
- 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

Objective 3: Annually increase efficiency of Terrestrial species grant award and contract process
Assigned Party: Terrestrial Species Program

Performance Measure, Benchmarks, and Explanations				
Performance Measure	Benchmark FY 21	Benchmark FY 22	Benchmark FY 23	Benchmark FY 24
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				
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 31 st , 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.

Fluid Federal Timelines and Actions

Some of these performance measures are dependent on Federal actions occurring and/or occurring on a specific timeline. Whether Federal actions pertaining to ESA species do occur allowing OSC to comment or engage in policy discussions, is beyond OSC's control. Additionally, proposed Federal timelines for certain actions often change and could affect OSC's ability to meet time specific performance measures.

Coronavirus

The Coronavirus pandemic has led to numerous accompanying restrictions and social norms. These changes can limit OSC's ability to meet certain performance measures such as conducting site visits or attending meetings. As the Coronavirus situation progresses, it could lead to other unforeseen limitations that could further affect OSC's ability to meet certain performance measures.

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.