Governor Bob Ferguson
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504

Chair June Robinson and Members
Senate Ways and Means Committee
John A. Cherberg Building, Room 303
304 15th Ave SW
Olympia, WA 98504

Chair Timm Ormsby and Members
House Appropriations Committee
John O'Brien Building, Room 315
504 15th Ave SW
Olympia, WA 98504

November 17, 2025

Re: Supporting Funding for WDFW Enforcement and Skamania Hatchery

Dear Governor Ferguson, Chair Robinson, Chair Ormsby and Committee Members,

The undersigned organizations respectfully support the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) FY 2027 funding request of $6 million for enforcement and request an additional $667,000 to restore funding for the Skamania Hatchery instead of closing it.

WDFW Enforcement Officers provide enforcement, vital services, and protection to all Washingtonians in addition to protecting our state's resources. There are only 160 general authority law enforcement commissioned officer positions statewide, covering Washington's 42.6 million acres. These officers are fully commissioned police officers who not only enforce fish and game laws, but they enforce all of Washington's laws while providing for the public's health and public safety.

The WDFW Enforcement Program has concurrent jurisdiction with Oregon and Idaho and will assist during severe weather events, natural disasters, and other critical incidents to perform public safety as well as search and rescue duties. The importance and contribution of the WDFW Enforcement Program goes far beyond fish and wildlife and is an essential part of the Washington law enforcement and public safety network.

Regarding fish hatchery funding, WDFW requested $1.9 million in the 2025-2027 budget for the operation of the North Toutle and Skamania Hatcheries. This request was not fully funded and $667,000 is needed to bring the Skamania Hatchery back online to operate. Noting that it would cost $432,000 in supplemental funding just to close the facility, it is

more efficient to provide the additional $235,000 to keep this job and revenue-creating resource open for our community.

The Skamania Hatchery provides critical support to fisheries and conservation goals and supports hundreds of millions of dollars of angling-related economic activity throughout Washington. Closing the facility will lead to the production loss of 85,000 Washougal River steelhead, 40,000 Salmon Creek steelhead, and 20,000 Rock Creek steelhead. We request the restoration of Skamania Hatchery funding and operations with an additional $667,000 in FY 2027.

Thank you for your consideration of these two important funding requests from Washington's hunting and fishing community.

Respectfully,

American Bear Foundation, Washington Chapter

Association of Northwest Steelheaders, Columbia River Chapter

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Washington Chapter

Coastal Conservation Association of Washington

Ducks Unlimited

Northwest Guides and Anglers Association

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

Safari Club International

Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

Washington State Guides Association

Cc: WDFW Director Kelly Susewind