

Pros and Cons of DFWP Funding Cycle Options

At its November 5, 2013 meeting, the Fish and Wildlife Licensing and Funding Advisory Council discussed four funding cycle options for the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. What follows is a list of the pros (+) and cons (-) identified for each that was excerpted from the Council's meeting notes.

Ten-Year Model (Current)

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FWP has budget flexibility within the 10-year cycle	If the increase is not successful in the legislature, there would be drastic consequences for the Department
Prices are not raised for ten years	Sportsmen would experience sticker shock (could be 61%) when the increases do happen
Staff time to work with legislature is less than for a more frequent cycle	Term limits mean legislators may not understand how this model works
FWP can earn interest in the funds built up early in the cycle	Large fund balances that carry over are attractive targets for legislators
	Revenues and appropriations are not considered at the same time
	There is less accountability to the legislative process

Four-Year Model (Proposed)

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Raises public awareness	Less opportunity for public participation than the commission authority model
Ability to make more frequent adjustments than once in ten years	Lower amount in reserve if legislature does not approve increases
More legislative oversight than the other two options	Is there a correlation between shorter interval (4 vs. 10 years) and deeper financial holes (not certain, but experience of other states might suggest this)
Forces the conversation every four years	
Magnitude of increase smaller than ten years	
Makes sense with term limits	
More certainty for the Department than the 10-year model	
Keeps the legislators accountable to constituents	
Closer connection for legislature between spending and revenues	

Commission Authority Model

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Depoliticizes the discussion	Little chance of success with legislature
Smaller increases each time	Some in the public won't like
Commission well-suited to take this on	More frequent increases
Contains protections to ensure Commission is reasonable	No precedent for this
Overcomes legislative turn over	
Opportunity for public participation	

Blend Commission Authority with Four, Six, or Ten-Year Model

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Smaller increase up front	More chance of success than commission authority alone
Legislature still puts cap on increases or works with commission on a model	Complicated, not sure how to structure
Controls increase comfort level of legislature	Legislators new to process would have hard time understanding
More public and legislature awareness	Lacks continuity over time
Lots of opportunity for public input	
React more quickly to changing situations	