

# Commission Guidebook



ASSOCIATION of  
FISH & WILDLIFE  
AGENCIES



2022 Edition

Understanding the Fish and Wildlife Commission's  
role in strategic partnership with the Agency,  
the Director, and Stakeholders

## Frequently Asked Questions

In April 2022 the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) hired the Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) to update the Commission Guidebook, last revised in 2007.

The Guidebook is a resource for on-boarding newly appointed Commission or Board members. It can also be used to help seasoned Commission members better understand their role and responsibilities on a state agency Commission. It is organized around the critical functions of the Commission and its relationships with the agency, the director, and stakeholders.

WMI updated the Guidebook using information from previous editions, the experiences and expertise of the authors<sup>1</sup>, a literature review of best management practices in natural resource governance, personal interviews with select agency directors and Commission members, and a survey of all the state's directors and Commission members.

The Guidebook covers topics such as:

- History of conservation and conservation commission system in the US
- North American Model of Wildlife Conservation
- Contemporary trends in conservation, including changing wildlife values
- Role of the Commission
- Roles and responsibilities of a Commission member
- Role of stakeholders
- Working with the agency
- Working in the public sector

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<sup>1</sup> Ann Forstchen, Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) Relevancy Specialist; Chris Smith, WMI Western Field Representative; Jon Gassett, WMI Southeastern Field Representative; Steve Williams, WMI President.





The Guidebook includes a variety of additional resources on decision-making processes; tips for holding effective virtual meetings; background on conservation funding sources; key federal conservation legislation and more.

WMI staff interviewed select agency Directors and Commission members about the utility of previous editions of the Guidebook and then surveyed all agency Directors and Commission members on what information might be most helpful to include in this edition.

The 2022 edition is concise and focuses on information requested by Directors and Commission members. The Guidebook, along with a 30-minute on-demand video on Commission roles and responsibilities, a slide deck with notes, and a “Frequently Asked Questions” document about Commission and Commission member roles and responsibilities are available [here](#) on the AFWA website or at the link, below. Any of these resources can be customized to fit your needs and context.

For more information, contact the AFWA Management Assistance Team.

[AFWA Management Assistance Team](#)

