

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
2018 Sport Fish Restoration Outstanding Project Award
in the category of Sport Fishery Development and Management

On behalf of the Fisheries Administration Section of the American Fisheries Society, I am pleased to be here today to present the 2018 Sport Fish Restoration Outstanding Project award to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife for the **Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program**.

Before I dive into the details of this award winning project, I would like to take a few moments to highlight the importance of the Sport Fish Restoration Program which largely funded this award winning initiative.

The Sport Fish Restoration outstanding project awards are intended to both highlight the importance and effectiveness of the Sport Fish Restoration program and recognize excellence in the categories of fisheries management, research, and education.

The Sport Fish Restoration Program, obtains revenues through a federal excise tax collected on fishing tackle, boats, and motorboat fuel. Revenues are returned to the states to enhance fisheries and boating activities. This is a true user pay – user benefit program. The program was first created in 1950, and expanded in 1984. It has provided \$8.6 billion nationwide toward better fishing and boating.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's allocation for 2018 was \$7.8 million. For the entire program period from 1950-2018, allocations to your state totaled \$218 million.

The Fisheries Administration Section recognizes the critical importance of this program for state fisheries agencies, but also knows that the program is subject to periodic reauthorization by Congress and ongoing scrutiny from the users who pay the excise tax. This annual awards program helps identify and showcase outstanding fisheries projects from across the country and, it is hoped,

The volunteer commitment is remarkable. During 2016-17, the STEP program worked with over 1,386 volunteers that provided over 48,405 hours of service to ODFW fish management activities, this is equivalent to over 36 full time employees. Since the program was established in 1981, more than 372,000 adult and youth volunteers have contributed nearly 3.75 million hours to over 42,000 STEP projects. In the 36 years since STEP was founded volunteers have donated the equivalent of over \$103.6 million in time and energy.

The American Fisheries Society applauds these extraordinary efforts. Again, congratulations to Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife for the *Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program*, recipient of the 2018 Sport Fish Restoration Outstanding Project Award.