



## AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

### BACKGROUND

The department has been tasked with raising one million dollars of private funds for the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund (OCRF) to help implement the Oregon Conservation Strategy and fulfill its broad mandate for engaging Oregonians in the outdoors. This effort began with the commitment of one million dollars of General Fund as match if the fundraising threshold was met. In August 2020, the legislature repurposed the General Fund available to this program in the 2019-2021 biennium for COVID-19 response. The legislature encouraged the department to return in 2021 to request General Fund match for all funds raised through the end of June, 2021—this legislative effort is ongoing.

The OCRF has embarked on a fundraising campaign and has had great success with donations under \$100, with over 18,000 Oregonians contributing to a total of over \$425,000. While we retain the goal of ultimately having 100,000 Oregonians donate \$10, it has become clear during our fundraising efforts that there is a tremendous opportunity to incentivize much larger donations by harnessing the General Fund match as an incentive.

The possibility of General Fund match for their donations resonates with individual Oregonians as well as larger organizations and has been a big part of the fundraising success to date. Several donations greater than \$10,000 were received, with those donors being strongly motivated by selecting a specific OCRF project of interest and by the potential for their contribution to be matched. In discussions with those donors, it became clear that we could be more effective in motivating donors by leveraging General Fund match. Those donors considering “restricted” donations (donations intended for a specific project) have expressed interest in having a portion of the potential General Fund being allocated back to their project of interest. This leverages the donor’s gift to help achieve the OCRF’s overall goals and specifically to support the project that motivated their restricted donation in the first place. It is clear that such a policy is a strong inducement for large donors to give to the OCRF, support their project of interest, and influence the amount of OCRF dollars available for all projects.

At the March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conservation and Recreation Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee), the members agreed that, at the donor’s request, any OCRF donation greater than or equal to \$10,000 and restricted to a specific OCRF Project, may be matched with General Fund by the Advisory Committee if and when the state’s General Fund matching commitment is met. The additional apportionment from the OCRF General Funds for an OCRF project with a qualifying restricted donation will be 30% of the donation amount. The Advisory Committee agreed that they would accept such donations for existing, Commission-approved OCRF Projects, but would also accept such restricted donations and make the match commitment for new OCRF Projects submitted at the invitation of the Advisory Committee. New OCRF Projects are evaluated by the Advisory Committee for consistency with the Expenditure Framework and the existing OCRF Project review criteria.

In recognition that this program may sunset on June 30, 2021, the Advisory Committee invited one project application to pilot this approach to incentivizing large donations. If the sunset is removed and funding is restored by the legislature, this approach will be useful in the future.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

All Oregon Conservation and Recreation Advisory Committee virtual meetings are open to the public.

## **ISSUE 1**

Conservation and Recreation Fund Expenditure Recommendation for “Forest Park for All”

## **ANALYSIS**

In April, the Advisory Committee invited Forest Park Conservancy to apply for a new OCRF project to pilot this new approach for incentivizing large donations. A subcommittee including four Advisory Committee members reviewed and scored the project. The Committee members reviewed the project using the existing scoresheet for OCRF projects and considered consistency with the Oregon Conservation Strategy, the Advisory Committee’s expenditure framework, the potential to leverage large donations, project viability, and ODFW staff review. The Subcommittee made a consensus recommendation to approve the project and the Advisory Committee voted unanimously to recommend the project to the Fish and Wildlife Commission.

“Forest Park for All” is a project through which Forest Park Conservancy and Love is King will create a network of Volunteer Ambassadors, that through proper training, will set the foundation of a culture in Forest Park where individuals can bring their whole selves to their interaction and experience with nature and strengthen and diversify the community of stewards dedicated to caring for and protecting public lands.

KEEN Footwear has committed \$20,000 to initially support “Forest Park for All”. If the legislature matches donations that were made this biennium, an additional \$6,000 of General Fund will automatically be committed to this project.

Today, we are seeking Commission approval to expend a minimum of \$20,000 from the OCRF for “Forest Park for All” with additional approval for \$6,000 if General Fund becomes available to the OCRF. We also seek approval to expend restricted donations of up to \$300,000 for “Forest Park for All” to incentivize more donors to contribute to the OCRF.

## **OPTIONS**

1. Approve Conservation and Recreation Fund expenditure recommendation from the Conservation and Recreation Advisory Committee.
2. Reject Conservation and Recreation Fund expenditure recommendation from the Conservation and Recreation Advisory Committee.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Approve Conservation and Recreation Fund expenditure recommendation from the Conservation and Recreation Advisory Committee.

## **DRAFT MOTION:**

I move to approve expenditure from the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund of up to \$300,000 for the project “Forest Park for All” including \$20,000 immediately, \$6,000 contingent on appropriation of General Fund to the OCRF, and \$274,000 contingent upon the receipt of future restricted donations.

**Effective Date:** June 18, 2021