

Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee Expenditure Framework – approved March 5, 2021

## Framework for Expenditures from the OCRF

### Vision

The Oregon Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee envisions an Oregon where native fish and wildlife thrives in healthy habitats across the state's lands and waters and where all Oregonians realize their role in achieving this vision. To do so, the Advisory Committee hopes to support robust conservation projects and get people involved with Oregon's fish, wildlife, wild places, and recreational opportunities to inspire their personal stewardship.

### Expenditures

The Conservation & Recreation Fund was created to grow the capacity of the Department of Fish and Wildlife to manage all of Oregon's fish and wildlife species and to implement the Oregon Conservation Strategy. The legislation creating the Fund is not specific about how the Advisory Committee will allocate funds. Given the nature of this limited duration Fund, it has been deemed most appropriate for the 2019-2021 biennium to focus on granting monies to partners and organizations that can undertake projects that meet the intent of the Fund.

At the April 6, 2020 meeting, the Advisory Committee indicated their intent to allocate resources from the 2019-2021 biennium to projects via a competitive process. The Committee plans to solicit a diversity of projects through a competitive Request For Proposals process which will be objectively judged through a set of established criteria. The Committee will retain the authority to use their discretion to support projects with the Committee's priorities and the legislative mandate without a competitive process.

By statute and administrative rule, the activities for which the department may expend monies from the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Promoting the health of Oregon's ecosystems and fish and wildlife species by implementing conservation programs and strategies identified in the Oregon Conservation Strategy, including conservation programs and strategies for the nearshore identified in the marine component of the Oregon Conservation Strategy;
- (2) Improving engagement of the public in wildlife watching, hunting and fishing opportunities and in other outdoor recreation opportunities related to and in support of healthy fish, wildlife and habitats;
- (3) Improving educational outreach and engagement of the public, including diverse and underserved communities, related to and in support of healthy fish, wildlife and habitats;
- (4) Engaging in, and providing funding for, joint projects of the department and the State Parks and Recreation Department or other state agencies as recommended by the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Advisory Committee; and
- (5) Other conservation, management, research, habitat improvement, enforcement, outdoor recreation or education activities.

### Other Expenditure Details:

- There is no minimum or maximum limit on financial requests that can be made from the Fund.
- The Committee may consider accepting restricted donations on a case by case basis by evaluating proposals against existing program priorities and criteria.

## Who Can Apply

Any public or private non-profit organization may request funds. Private non-profit organizations must have tax-exempt status under the IRS Code Section 501(c)(3). Businesses and individuals are not eligible to apply.

## Program Priorities for the OCRF

To be considered for funding, the funded elements of a project must include one of the priorities defined as either Conservation and/or Recreation as described below. In all priority areas, the Advisory Committee will prioritize projects that engage Oregonians in the solution to a key conservation issue or in recreational opportunities that reach out to and engage people who have not participated in the past because of language barriers, financial barriers, access barriers, etc.

The definition of Conservation for the purposes of the Oregon Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee, is: ***Improving the health of Oregon's ecosystems and populations of fish and wildlife species.***

For conservation projects, The Advisory Committee will prioritize:

- Habitat restoration and improving habitat connectivity related to implementing the recommendations in the Oregon Conservation Strategy and evolving science.
- Science, research, and monitoring directly related to implementing the recommendations in the Oregon Conservation Strategy, especially through community science activities.

The definition of Recreation for the purposes of the work of the Oregon Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee, is: ***Any activity undertaken to enjoy, appreciate, or support fish, wildlife, and their habitats.***

For recreation projects, The Advisory Committee will prioritize:

- Opportunities to engage and expand the number and diversity of Oregon's outdoor users.
- Opportunities to introduce Oregonians to wildlife-associated recreation.
- Educational materials and opportunities related to responsible recreation, ecology, and wildlife conservation for kids and adults in multiple languages.
- Research or planning that supports responsible recreational opportunities.
- Enhancement or restoration of trails and access to waterways in a way that preserves or enhances sensitive habitat or that resolves impacts related to informal or dispersed recreation in sensitive habitat.

The committee welcomes projects that combine conservation and recreation.

## Measuring Success

The Committee recognizes the importance of both short- and long-term monitoring to evaluate project outcomes. Beyond the reporting that will be required by our successful applicants, the committee intends to allocate a minimum of 5% of funds to investigating, monitoring, and reporting on the success of our expenditures on a biennial basis. Both evidence-based and values-based metrics may be considered to measure the impact of our projects.

## OCRF Outdoor Equity Subcommittee- Statement of Purpose

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund (OCRF) has a broad mandate to advance conservation issues and recreation projects in support of the Oregon Conservation Strategy for the benefit of all Oregonians. Embedded within the mandate for the OCRF is a priority commitment to reach out and engage underserved people and communities who have not traditionally participated in conservation issues or outdoor recreation in the past due to various barriers and perceptions, including but not limited to ethnicity, race, language, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disabilities, and/or other cultural, religion and/or economic status, and other considerations as listed in the State of Oregon Equity Framework

[https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policy/Documents/EquityFrameworkCovid19\\_2020.pdf](https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policy/Documents/EquityFrameworkCovid19_2020.pdf). The OCRF Advisory Committee further recognizes that these barriers will not be broken down coincidentally but rather need a focused and pursued endeavor sponsored by the Advisory Committee.

In support of this commitment, the OCRF Advisory Committee has established the ORCR “Outdoor Equity” subcommittee with the explicit purpose of reaching out and connecting with intentionality to people, communities and organizations that have not traditionally engaged in matters tied to ODFW’s Conservation Strategy. To this end, we are dedicating a significant portion of the available funds to this purpose, and will work with these audiences and stakeholders to identify and fund opportunities and projects that mutually support the interests, the intersection, and engagement of underserved communities in Oregon with the Conservation and Recreation Fund.

## Matching large, restricted donations (valid through June 30, 2021)

The Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund (OCRF) has been tasked with raising one million dollars of private funds to help implement the Oregon Conservation Strategy and fulfill our broad mandate. This effort was begun with the promise of one million dollars of General Funds as match if the fundraising was successful.

The OCRF has embarked on a fundraising campaign and has had great success with donations under \$100, with over 17,000 Oregonians contributing to a total that is growing close \$400,000. 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.

We have found that the possibility of general fund match for their donations resonates with individual Oregonian’s as well as larger entities and is a big part of our success. Several donations greater than \$10,000 have been received, with those donors being strongly motivated by the potential match. In discussions with those donors, as well as other potential large donors, it became clear that we could be even more effective in motivating donors with a modification of how we allocate that match. Those

donors considering “restricted” donations (that is, donations intended for a specific project) have expressed a strong interest in having a portion of the anticipated future match being allocated back to that specific project. This leverages the donor’s gift not only to help achieve our overall goals but specifically to the project that motivated their restricted donation in the first place. It is clear that such a policy would be a strong inducement for large donors to give to the OCRF.

The following is intended to be a framework to guide the Advisory Committee in incentivizing donors to give restricted donations greater than \$10,000.

1. At the donor’s request, any OCRF donation greater than or equal to \$10,000 that is restricted to a specific OCRF Project may be matched by the Advisory Committee if and when the state’s General Fund matching commitment is met.
2. The additional apportionment from the OCRF General Funds for an OCRF Project with a qualifying restricted donation will be 30% of the donation amount.
3. The Advisory Committee may accept such donations and make the match commitment for existing, Commission-approved OCRF Projects.
4. The Advisory Committee may also accept such restricted donations and make the match commitment for new OCRF Projects received at the invitation of the Advisory Committee.
  - a. New OCRF Projects will be evaluated by the Advisory Committee for consistency with the Expenditure Framework and existing OCRF Project review criteria.