

Attachment 6

2023-25 ODFW External Budget Advisory Committee Input Received

March 2022 meeting	Comments
	Interest in knowing metrics of use of .dfw and .myODFW websites
	Support continuous deferred maintenance
	Interest and support for Recovering America's Wildlife Act
	The agency should do more to provide information on public access
	Commercial Fish Fund solvency and impact to license fees
	Support for continuation of positions provided in the 2022 Legislative Session
	Agency should link Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation (R3) with other initiatives
	Federal funding (IIJA) for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations
	Maintain dedicated surcharge funding on licenses for existing programs
	Support for existing outreach programs, specifically Salmon Trout Enhancement Program
Online Comments Forum	<p>I listened to most of the webinar. I'm not sure which section it applies to, so I am submitting my feedback here. It is in regards to Debbie Colbert's comments on linking future license pricing to the consumer price index. I think most charter fishing companies would like to see what this would have looked like had it been done over the past 15-20 years vs. what price increases actually looked like during that time-frame. That should be a pretty easy chart to put together. Also, would it be somehow protected from radical increases during times of unusually high inflation (such as right now)? I think something needs to be done to regulate the license price increases and keep them reasonable without having to introduce new bills constantly, but this approach certainly needs to be considered quite carefully before moving forward.</p>
	<p>I didn't catch the name of the staff member reporting at the last regarding how to involve more in fishing opportunities and especially how to reach out to underserved populations and especially those within BIPOC. As an angler Ed Instructor, I have had the opportunity to teach and assist with a variety of programs including outdoor activities from Tualatin Parks and Recreation, Portland Parks and Recreation (multiple locations), Oregon Zoo Summer Camps, Camp Angelos programs, Tualatin Riverkeepers outdoor summer programs, and Latino Girls Outdoors. I give permission to this staff member to review my historical angler education reports to obtain contact information. (I do not keep copies). I also do not know which programs will return post pandemic. Many of these programs halted activities in the last two years and I haven't seen any contacts recently in the Portland Metro area to restart many of these recreational and summer camp opportunities. I hope this helps.</p>
	<p>I think the Department does a good job of balancing the need for administrative support with the customer-driven demand for focus on your primary conservation and recreation missions. I do think that the "one size fits all" employee to supervisor ratio mandate from DAS years ago was damaging to efficient function as it did not recognize the numerous small work teams scattered across the Oregon landscape and the need to have a supervisor present and accessible at most of those. I hope you can go back to a more realistic supervision scenario. Recruiting and retaining a more diverse workforce is also critical to the Department's future.</p>
	<p>I also think that your focus on recruitment and retention of license buyers is appropriate. Where possible I encourage you to expand that outreach as much as possible to just building a general connection to the outdoors amongst Oregonians</p>
	<p>I am confident the R&amp;E board would support the deferred maintenance proposal.</p>
	<p>I didn't see any comments regarding the Leaburg Hatchery and others that were exposed to fire damage. Is there any additional maintenance required post fire to maintain the clean waters sources, pumps, buildings etc.? Also, has the Newport Office Relocation project in cooperation with OSU dissolved or is it on the back burner?</p>
	<p>I noticed that there wasn't any update on hatcheries (Like Leaburg etc.) that were threatened by wildfires in 2022 and impacted due to possible water problems. I'm curious if all of the threats due to water quality, building structures, etc. post wildfire at the various hatcheries have been resolved. Also, I am interested in the Newport Field Office Relocation project teamed with OSU Marine Research Building. Has this been dropped or deferred? Will this be a capitalized expense verses maintenance?</p>
	<p>I support the deferred maintenance approach that the agency is continuing, particularly the POP(s) in the next budget package. While I think it is appropriate that you focus on resource-linked infrastructure such as hatcheries, it is good to see you devote some of your proposed funding towards addressing the workspaces used by many of your employees around the state. As shown at Clackamas, Bend, and Pendleton, many of these sites have become or will soon be essentially unusable, in part due to a lack of funding for maintenance and improvements in the past. I support the Phase 2 funding to address these problems.</p>
	<p>I know the R&amp;E board is highly supportive of the habitat division, especially the water quality &amp; quantity, hydropower, and drought planning elements.</p>
	<p>There was a salt water flat marsh that was heavily used by migratory birds that recently went dry SE of Bend Oregon. (I don't recall its name unfortunately). Part of the issue was proper water escapement from an upstream dam and still maintain adequate water for irrigation, fisheries, etc. Is this item on ODFW's radar?</p>
	<p>I recently read articles regarding a saltwater marsh/lake SE of Bend (don't remember its name) that went dry recently. This was historically a migratory bird sanctuary. Is ODFW involved with this revitalization project? Since drought conditions are continuing in south central Oregon, I'm curious if this area is on ODFW's radar? (Acknowledge that there is multiple use of water resources for irrigation, etc. and water release from the upriver reservoir due to limited water supply is a mitigating factor to restoring this historical saltwater marsh/lake.)</p>
	<p>Well, to quote Yogi, "it's deja' vu all over again"! As many in the Department and on the Commission will know, the demise of the previous Habitat Division was (my opinion) partly because the supportive constituents at the time (mainly consumptive users) were not as engaged and supportive of habitat protection as they were of traditional fish and wildlife programs. Add to that the legislature's association of the Division with often contentious land management decision making, and the Division became vulnerable during an economic downsizing cycle. My recommendation for the new Division is to build and cultivate support amongst habitat protection proponents and the general public. I think it is a good idea to put as many positive restoration and protection programs as possible within the Division, so that the perception that the Division is all "regulatory" will be ameliorated. I am very supportive of including the regional habitat bios, farm bill bios, mitigation and restoration bios, and other programs that put a positive face on the Department into the Habitat Division.</p>
	<p>WaterWatch strongly supports agency budget requests related to the Habitat Division, including the focal areas of drought planning/climate change, land and water management and data and information gaps.</p>
	<p>We are particularly supportive of ODFW's water program POPs including Integrated Water Resources Solutions and Stateside Stream Temperature Monitoring. Funding the Watear Program at ODFW is our top priority.</p>
	<p>That said, MISSING from the Water Program POP list is a continuation of the limited duration instream water rights protest staff (a time limited position was funded in the 2022 Drought Package). We would strongly suggest adding this as an agency POP, preferably as a permanent position. There are nearly 200 instream water rights that have been protested; as OWRD works through those protests ODFW needs to be adequately staffed to address these critical flow protection tools.</p>

<p>TU strongly supports Habitat Division's Water Quality and Quantity Program and its efforts to study instream needs of fish and wildlife, plan and support flow restoration efforts, and secure new instream water rights (pp. 36 and 41-43 of Powerpoint). TU is engaged in similar and related efforts (particularly in Northeastern Oregon and the Klamath basin), and we believe Habitat Division's programs are critical to ensuring sufficient water instream for native fish in a warmer, drier climate.</p>
<p>The R&amp;E board supports the management of fisheries in a sustainable manner. We are supportive of examining and planning for climate change in this area. Of course, we also support ongoing efforts to improve hatchery operations.</p>
<p>Very concerned regarding water quality and availability due to severe/exceptional drought in south and central Oregon cascades and SE Oregon. Fresh water battles have only begun for all the water users. What preliminary actions is the Fish Division taking to participate and preclude water use conflicts and maintain diverse fish population survival?</p>
<p>I think generally that the Fish Division is doing a good job in what has been a very difficult time for many fisheries and fish populations, particularly salmon and steelhead. I would encourage the Division to focus on being supportive of many of your programs and interests, to include:</p>
<p>More understanding of marine fisheries generally. This includes the need to continue and even increase monitoring programs such as sport/commercial fishery data collection and fishery-independent monitoring. PSMFC provides coordination and assistance to member states, and our priorities include maintaining efficient, functional fisheries.</p>
<p>The Marine program has been doing habitat work for a long time, and has been emphasizing the additional need for this work to inform EFH, fisheries access, offshore wind siting, etc. The Habitat Division should closely integrate and support this work in Oregon's marine environments.</p>
<p>The agency also needs to focus on and understand harvest participant demographics in terms of activities. One particular gap is in your inability to pinpoint #anglers who participate in ocean vs. inland fisheries. This uncertainty comes up when your staff is working with PSMFC, MRIP, NOAA, etc. Any additional data management and analysis the Division can provide would be welcome.</p>
<p>In addition, and always problematic, you need to retain support for use of hatcheries as a management tool, continue engagement with anglers who often perceive their interests as diverging with the Department's conservation focus, and recruiting and retaining anglers and just Oregonian's general interest in the resource.</p>
<p>The idea to move away from have "one-step" fee increases to a CPI index or automatic incremental steps is a good one and should be pursued through legislation. Building in some automatic increases that will track the agency's costs more closely so that you don't get flat-funded and unable to deal with rapidly increasing costs would be a great improvement.</p>
<p>WaterWatch supports ODFW's work to conserve native populations.</p>
<p>In particular, we support proposed POPS related to Klamath Salmon Restoration Monitoring, Klamath Salmon Restoration Coordinator, Salmonid forecasting and habitat models, Rogue S. Coast winter steelhead monitoring, and fish habitat distribution/barrier stewardship.</p>
<p>(1) TU agrees that water quality and quantity are key limiting factors for native fish populations in Oregon, especially with regard to forecasted climate change effects on streamflow (p. 54 of Powerpoint). We encourage Fish Division to continue with its plan to prioritize efforts that will best support our fisheries in a warmer, drier climate.  (2) TU enthusiastically supports the Fish Division's plan to "explore pathways to a restored lower Snake River and recovery of salmon/steelhead" (p. 55 of Powerpoint). TU advocates for removal of the four Lower Snake dams because our staff scientists are confident that dam removal is necessary to recover salmon and steelhead in the Snake basin. We encourage the Department to consider all options for restoration of that watershed's stocks – including dam removal. TU respectfully requests to be included in any agency stakeholder conversations about lower Snake River dams and salmon/steelhead recovery.</p>
<p>Will there be additional check stations to help counteract CWD and other ailments of big game due to recent outbreaks in Western Idaho?</p>
<p>I think that the Wildlife Division is doing a good job in managing the state's populations and recreational opportunities. This has always been a challenge, balancing the broad but often shallow "general" interest in wildlife of the overall population with the intense focused interest of the many user groups. and the I would encourage the Division to continue with your priorities, to include:</p>
<p>More understanding of wildlife populations generally. This includes continuing and even expanding monitoring programs where possible. The really excellent job that the Department has done monitoring the Oregon wolf population, determining the impact on livestock in real time, and dealing with the diverse public opinions surrounding this species is admirable. Hopefully the RAWA will pass soon and provide additional resources for this level of effort (or something like it) for more species. The Division should prioritize the match required for any funding that does become available.</p>
<p>The Health and Populations lab and the Research programs are lean, efficient operations that produce a high quality product and should be supported. The WMAs are gems and provide excellent habitat and often unsung contributions towards addressing damage and human conflicts. Where it is consistent with their primary mission, the Division should further capitalize on the WMA's outreach and education potential.</p>
<p>The Division also needs to continue to focus on harvest demographics. However, wherever possible you should try and reduce barriers to entry due to difficulty understanding rules and regulations. Continued recruitment into the hunting ranks by a portion of the population will maintain support for the NA Model, and expanding participation to a more representative portion of our diverse population should be a priority.</p>
<p>The idea to move away from have "one-step" fee increases to a CPI index or automatic incremental steps is a good one and should be pursued through legislation.</p>
<p>WaterWatch supports the conservation strategy implementation, and support continued inclusion of aquatic fish and wildlife in those efforts.</p>
<p>Continued support for field programs is an essential element of maintaining connection to Oregon's human population. It is also necessary for making sure that agency priorities and programs are implemented effectively.</p>
<p>Does OSP have enough officers in the field to support wildlife enforcement? Seems that we are thin on resources.</p>
<p>Oregon's relatively unique enforcement structure is effective. In order to continue as such, excellent communication and coordination is required between OSP and ODFW.</p>
<p>More enforcement is a good thing.</p>
<p>I like the idea of increasing license fees gradually based on CPI. However, with high inflation that we are experiencing post pandemic, implementing a CPI index now may be a significant shock to the license consumer.</p>
<p>PSMFC is supportive of maintaining an effective and well funded organization and therefore supports ODFW's legislative concepts generally. We are particularly interested in those that address interstate issues and address threats to fish and wildlife populations at the larger scale, such as ocean acidification and hypoxia, Columbia river fisheries, etc.</p>

In 2019 HB 2437 (Ag channel maintenance program) passed, based largely on representations by bill proponents ( Reps David Brock Smith and Susan McLain) that it only touched "dry channels". These representations are found in the legislative record of House and Senate Floor Speeches and also committee hearings. That said, despite assurances that the program was limited to dry channels/streams, Section 9 of the Act directs ODFW to establish, by rule, one or more general permits for WET waterways, including Essential Salmon Habitat. The agency has not yet developed this rule, but when it does this could have devastating effects across Oregon's rivers and streams. We would encourage the agency to develop a POP that would delete Section 9 (HB 2437, 2019) in whole from existing law. Such a change in law would ensure the program is consistent with legislator representations as to the program's scope.

The primary comment I have as an R&E board member is the lack of a surcharge increase for R&E. It is our understanding that R&E surcharges have never increased since the program was created in 1989. This represents a significant decrease in spending power that the legislature intended for the board to have. The 2023 preliminary legislative concept to tie fee increases to the Consumer Price Index would be welcome if it also includes an increase to R&E surcharges.

We are supportive of the principle's used in developing ODFW's budget and the Mission and Goals in ODFW's Strategic Plan. Broadening the financial support for agency programs is particularly important, and should align with the public's interest in fish and wildlife.

The current inflationary environment will make it increasingly difficult to maintain programs unless addressed effectively. At the state level, ODFW should focus on recruitment and retention of license buyers, maximizing access to federal revenue sources, gaining general fund support, and addressing costs wherever possible.

A CPI index based fee increase structure would be an added improvement.

If ODFW needs to implement some or all of the budget reductions outlined, focus should be first on maintaining the key conservation, monitoring, and licensing functions necessary to avoid disruption to fisheries or long term damage to populations.

We would request that required 10% reductions list does not touch the water program. This program has been long underfunded and gains in recent bienniums need to be protected. Water is a critical issue, made even more so climate change and increasing incidents of drought.

I didn't recall the name of the staff member that provided an update to the participation program and especially getting people involved in unrepresented communities and those especially in the BIPOC community. Historically, I had the opportunity to teach a variety of programs that crossed a variety of communities and representation by a variety of youth including the BIPOC community. I don't recall the contacts since I don't keep a copy of the ODFW Angler Education reports. However, you have my permission to examine them if it would be helpful if they are retained at ODFW. I have had the opportunity to participate with Tualatin Parks and Recreation, Tualatin River Keepers, Oregon Zoo Summer Programs, Portland Parks and Recreation (east and North Portland buildings), Camp Angelos, and Latino girl's recreation programs.

I haven't been contacted or have I seen much activity recently from these programs especially post pandemic. I also do not know how many of these historical programs will have the opportunity to be revitalized.

PSMFC applauds ODFW for these [R3-Community Engagement] initiatives and supports them whole-heartedly.

I am confident that the R&E board would be supportive of the proposed POPs that relate to fish and flows/water.

PSMFC is supportive of the Agency's POPs. The inclusion of plans to address many of the overarching issues impacting Oregon's environment generally, such as climate change and all of its associated impacts, is admirable.

We are particularly interested in POPs such as the one addressing whale entanglement in the crab fishery, Klamath restoration, and the many others that enhance restoration, management, or understanding of fish and habitats that contribute to interstate fisheries, will provide any assistance we can to help with such issues.

We are also ready to assistance in any way we can with ODFW's congressional representatives or with federal agencies in our role to help ODFW and the Oregon fishing industry sustainably manage our valuable Pacific Ocean resources and promote the better utilization of fisheries.

WaterWatch support of POPs is noted in previous sections (water, habitat and fisheries), but we will say again that our top priority is funding the Habitat Division's Water Program which includes new POPs on Integrated Water Resources Solutions, Stream Temperature Monitoring and data (on the data piece that was a focal point in an earlier slide but I'm not sure where it is in the packages in the provided link?).

We also strongly support new positions for the Habitat Division (policy and operations), including legal fees. Additionally we support POPs supporting Klamath salmon restoration (two POPs), Salmonid forecasting and Habitat models, Rogue Winter Steelhead Modeling and Fish Habitat/Barrier Distribution Stewardship.

(1) Habitat Division – TU strongly supports the “Habitat Division Policy and Operations” proposal (p. 121) because that package will allow the Division to build and utilize the necessary tools for complex mapping, planning, and analyses. We are also particularly supportive of the “Integrated Water Resource Solutions” and “Statewide Stream Temperature Monitoring” items (p. 122).

(2) OCS – TU supports the “OR Conservation and Recreation Fund Coordinator” package (p. 123). TU and its conservation partners advocated for \$5 million of funding for the OCRF during the 2022 legislative session, and we’re excited to see the OCRF growing. Making this limited duration position a permanent position is an important step in ensuring the program has sufficient capacity and institutional knowledge.

(3) Fish – TU strongly supports the “Klamath Salmon Restoration Monitoring” and “Klamath Salmon Resoration Coordinator” packages (p. 127). TU is highly engaged in Klamath basin restoration efforts, and we appreciate the Department’s plan to increase its staff capacity for anadromous fish reintroduction efforts that will pair with our work. We also support the “Rogue South Coast Winter Steelhead Monitoring” package (p. 128) because that is a key element of implementing the Rogue-South Coast Multi-Species plan and conducting the monitoring paid for by the two new angler validations implemented by HB 4072 (2022).

(4) Minam River Wildlife Area Acquisition – TU supports the POP to complete Phase 2 of the Minam transaction (p. 124) because that reach of the Minam provides important habitat for spring chinook, summer steelhead, and bull trout. TU’s Flow Restoration program focuses on rivers including the Grande Ronde, and we support land conservation and a new wildlife area in that watershed.

(5) Position Reconciliation – TU supports the “Hydrography Data Coordination” position (p.135) because stream classification determinations are an important component of the PFA framework.

**Comments**

May 2022 meeting

- Appreciation for the chronic wasting disease POP being added
- Agreement with the top tier of General Fund POPs, lower tier of Federal Funds/Lottery Funds/Other Funds asks
- Trout Unlimited stated they could see the POPs they are most supportive of prioritized high on the list
- Continued support for mule deer planning/research POPs
- Questions about Private Forest Accord positions, and appreciation to see that work in POP list and in the draft Agency Request Budget
- There were no requests to move a POP up or down on the list
- One person referenced they now had a better understanding of where beaver work is and why no POP is developed specifically for it