



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

In 2019, the Oregon legislature established the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund (OCRF) within the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife as a new way for Oregonians to support a broad range of conservation and recreation efforts throughout the state. The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) adopted new Division 098, Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) in October of 2019 to create the nine-member OCRF Advisory Committee. The intent of the OCRF is to increase the Department's capacity to protect and enhance the species and habitats identified in the Oregon Conservation Strategy and create new opportunities for wildlife watching, urban conservation, community science, and other wildlife-associated recreation.

To date, the OCRF Advisory Committee has recommended and received approval from the Commission to fund 90 projects through five rounds of competitive request for proposals (RFP). These projects have occurred across the state and have provided needed funds to groups promoting outdoor equity and access as well as science-focused conservation and research.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

All the OCRF Advisory Committee meetings are open to public participation and have time on the agenda for comments from participating members of the public. The Department has solicited input from communities likely to be affected by the proposed rule to assess the extent of any fiscal impact, and whether the rules will have any other significant impacts.

ISSUE

Restrictions on submittal of project proposals to a minimum of 60 days prior to a scheduled OCRF Advisory Committee meeting

ANALYSIS

The Department provides public notification for the project solicitation process including deadlines for proposal submittal. Under the current rules, interested parties must submit proposed projects to the advisory committee not less than 60 days prior to a scheduled meeting. The

current experiences from staff and OCRF Advisory Committee is that the restriction is not necessary and in fact has restricted the efficiency of the review process in some circumstances. The Department is proposing a rule amendment to remove the restriction and allow the OCRF Advisory Committee the ability to better address the needs of stakeholders and projects by reducing the time required between project submission and review. This shorter time window will be beneficial to applications with narrow work windows (e.g., seasonal field work) or other time restrictions/needs, while not undermining any established proposal review procedures already in place through the OCRF Expenditure Framework.

OPTIONS

1. Amend Conservation and Recreation fund rules in Division 98 as proposed by staff
2. Modify proposed rule amendment
3. No action

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Option 1.

DRAFT MOTION:

I move to amend OAR 635-098-0060 as proposed by staff.

Effective Date: Upon filing.