



Meeting:
Friday, January 16, 2026 - 8:00 AM
Oregon Dept of Fish and Wildlife
Virtual Meeting
Viewing Room: Classroom
4034 Fairview Industrial Dr SE
Salem, OR 97302

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Commission minutes are considered draft until approved by the Commission.

Notice of these meetings had been made by press release of statewide media circulation. Those attending part or all of the meeting included:

Mary Wahl, Chair	Debbie Colbert, Director
Becky Hatfield-Hyde, Vice Chair	Ken Loffink, Chief Operating Officer
Bob Spelbrink, Commissioner	Shaun Clements, Deputy Director of Fish & Wildlife Programs
Mark Labhart, Commissioner	Nick Myatt, East Region Manager
Dallas Hall Defrees, Commissioner	Mike Gauvin, Acting West Region Manager
Hugh Morrison, Commissioner	Bernadette Graham Hudson, Wildlife Division Administrator
Dave Moldal, Commissioner	Mike Harrington, Fish Division Administrator
	Sarah Reif, Habitat Division Administrator
	Michelle Tate, Executive Assistant
	Doug Shugart, Captain Oregon State Police
	Erin Donald, Assistant Attorney General

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MEETING

On Friday, **January 16, 2026, at 8:00 AM, Chair Wahl called the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission** (the Commission) meeting to order.

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DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Field Reports – in written form only; *this report is available in the meeting materials and at <https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-01/Jan%202026%20Field%20Report%20MRP.pdf>*

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Expenditure Report
Ken Loffink, Chief Operating Officer

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Ken reported that for the month ending November 30, 2025; the department held a total of \$163.4 million in state treasury, \$73.8 million in unrestricted cash (approximately \$54.8 million excluding \$19 million in wildfire insurance proceeds) and \$89.6 million in restricted funds. At roughly 20% through the 2025–27 biennium, agency expenditures amount to 15% of the approved budget, indicating spending is tracking slightly below expectations. In response to projected General and Lottery Fund shortfalls, the department submitted options to reduce 5% of its allocations, with decisions pending during the February–March 2026 legislative session

1 following the state's next revenue forecast. Additionally, initial planning for the 2027–29
2 biennium budget has begun, including policy option submissions, revenue/expenditure
3 projections, upcoming stakeholder outreach, and anticipated guidance from the Legislative Fiscal
4 Office and DAS Chief Financial Officer ahead of the June 2026 Commission meeting

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6 *This report is available in the meeting materials and at*
7 [https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-01/Commission%20Financial%20Report%20January%202026.pdf)
8 [01/Commission%20Financial%20Report%20January%202026.pdf](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-01/Commission%20Financial%20Report%20January%202026.pdf)

10 **CLIMATE & OCEAN CHANGE POLICY REPORT**

11 SMURFing along the Oregon Coast--understanding the impacts of a changing climate on
12 rockfish recruitment

13 Dr. Kirsten Grorud-Colvert
14 Moritz Schmid, Research Project Lead

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16 *This presentation is located in the commission material and can be viewed at*
17 [https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-01/Presentation_Climate%20and%20Ocean%20Change%20Report.pdf)
18 [01/Presentation_Climate%20and%20Ocean%20Change%20Report.pdf](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-01/Presentation_Climate%20and%20Ocean%20Change%20Report.pdf)

20 **Adopt Temporary Rules**

21 Debbie Colbert, Director, requested the Commission ratify the following temporary rules. The
22 seven (7) temporary rules were previously adopted by the director under her emergency action
23 authority.

24 1.) **635-005-0465**

25 **2025-2026 Commercial Dungeness Crab Season Opening North of Cape Falcon**

26 Adopted 12/19/2025: effective 12/19/2025 through 3/31/2026

27 This amended rule sets the opening date for the Oregon 2025-2026 ocean commercial
28 Dungeness crab fishery from Cape Falcon to the Oregon-Washington border.

30 2.) **635-041-0063**

31 **Modify Season Structure and Allow Sales of Sturgeon Caught in Columbia River Treaty**
32 **Setline Fisheries**

33 Adopted 12/23/2025: effective 1/1/2026 through 1/31/2026

34 This amended rule modifies the season structure in permanent rule for the treaty sturgeon
35 setline fishery and provides state authorization of sales of white sturgeon caught in the
36 winter Treaty setline fisheries in Bonneville Pool, The Dalles Pool, and The John Day Pool
37 to reflect recent tribal action to modify these fisheries.

39 3.) **635-023-0101**

40 **Modify Recreational Retention Fishery for Sturgeon in John Day Pool and Adjacent**
41 **Tributaries**

42 Adopted 12/23/2025: effective 1/1/2026 through 4/30/2026

43 This amended rule modifies the recreational retention fishery regulations for white
44 sturgeon in the John Day Pool (John Day Dam upstream to McNary Dam) of the mainstem
45 Columbia River and all adjacent tributaries. Retention will be allowed in the John Day Pool

1 from January 1 through April 30, 2026. Modifications are consistent with actions taken by
2 the Departments of Fish & Wildlife for the States of Oregon and Washington at a Columbia
3 River Joint State hearing on November 13, 2025
4

5 4.) **635-023-0101**

6 **Close Retention of Sturgeon in Recreational Fisheries in the John Day Pool and Adjacent**
7 **Tributaries**

8 Adopted 1/9/2026: effective 1/10/2026 through 4/30/2026

9 This amended rule closes the retention season for white sturgeon on the mainstem
10 Columbia River in the John Day Pool (John Day Dam upstream to McNary Dam) and all
11 adjacent tributaries.

12 Modifications are consistent with actions taken by the Departments of Fish & Wildlife for the
13 States of Oregon and Washington at a Columbia River Joint State hearing on January 8, 2026.
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15 5.) **635-042-0130**

16 **Adopt Non-Treaty Columbia River Mainstem Commercial Smelt Fishery**

17 Adopted 1/9/2026: effective 1/12/2026 through 3/19/2026

18 This amended rule will implement the 2026 non-treaty commercial smelt fishery in Zones
19 1-3 of the lower Columbia River on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 5 a.m. to
20 5 p.m. from January 12 through February 19, 2026, and from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Mondays
21 and Thursdays from February 23 through March 19, 2026. Modifications are consistent
22 with actions taken by the Departments of Fish and Wildlife for the States of Oregon and
23 Washington at the Columbia River Compact hearing held on January 8, 2026.
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25 6.) **635-016-0510**

26 **Allow Bait on the Coquille River and Tributaries**

27 Adopted 1/12/2026: effective 1/12/2026 through 7/10/2026

28 This rule will correct language that inadvertently removed the allowance of bait in the
29 Coquille River basin from January 1st through May 31st and November 1st through
30 December 31st.
31

32 7.) **635-067-0000**

33 **Amend Rules to Reduce 2026 Oregon Hunting Tags for Rocky Mountain Goats**

34 Adopted: 01/12/2026: effective date: 01/12/2026 through 07/10/2026

35 Oregon Administrative Rules establishing tag numbers for 2026 Rocky Mountain goat hunts
36 were adopted by the Fish and Wildlife Commission on September 12, 2025, meeting. Tag
37 numbers adopted at that time did not account for low number of Rocky Mountain goats
38 observed in the Snake River Wildlife Management Unit during the most recent population
39 surveys.
40

41 Action:

42 Commissioner Spelbrink moved to ratify the seven (7) temporary rules set forth in today's
43 agenda. Commissioner Morrison seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously,
44 seven (7) in favor. Wahl, Hatfield-Hyde; Labhart, Spelbrink, Hall Defrees, Morrison, Moldal
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1 **PUBLIC FORUM**

2 This part of the agenda was for comments on topics not scheduled on the agenda. The
3 Commission does not take action on items brought to their attention in this forum.

4 *Wallowa County Wolves*

5 *Commissioner John Hillock, Wallowa County*

7 *Wallowa County Commissioner Resolution on Wolf Management Policy*

8 *Alicia Zinni*

9 *Chris Cunningham*

10 *Rawley Bigsby*

12 *Online License Ordering*

13 *Quentin LeRoy Beagley*

15 *Black Bear Trap Check Times*

16 *Kelly Peterson, Oregon State Director for Humane World*

18 *Revenue And Expenses*

19 *David Blessman*

21 *Sauvie Island Online Parking Permits*

22 *Kristen Cook, Sauvie Island Cove Market*

24 *Predation Impacts on Mule Deer and Big Horn Sheep*

25 *Paul Davis*

28 **Exhibit A: COMMISSION MINUTES**

29 Action:

30 Commissioner Labhart moved to approve December 16, 2025, meeting minutes with
31 continued authority to correct grammar and punctuation. Commissioner Hall Defrees seconded
32 the motion, and the motion carried seven (7) in favor; Wahl, Hatfield-Hyde; Labhart, Spelbrink,
33 Hall Defrees, Morrison, Moldal

35 **EXHIBIT B: UPDATING CEREMONIAL AND SUBSISTENCE HUNTING TAG NUMBERS FOR**
36 **BURNS PAIUTE TRIBE**

37 The Commission updated the number of hunting tags available to the Burns Paiute Tribe to
38 support their member's interests in ceremonial and subsistence hunting opportunities. The
39 amendments also aligned the rules to recently adopted mule deer hunt areas and slightly
40 expand the geographic scope of those opportunities.

41 *Commission Action: Rulemaking*

42 *Philip Milburn, Malheur/Klamath Watershed Manager*

43 *Tracy Kennedy, Chairperson of Tribal Council, Burns Paiute Tribe*

1 *Presentation:* Phil and Chairman Kennedy provided the Commission with a presentation
2 outlining updates to hunting opportunities for the Burns Paiute Tribe, emphasizing the evolution
3 of ceremonial tags since 2017, including increases in elk tags and expanded access through
4 agreements like the 2022 Memorandum of Agreement with Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.
5 The proposed changes aim to update ceremonial and subsistence tags by transitioning mule
6 deer hunt areas from WMU to DHA, modifying elk and pronghorn hunt areas, increasing tag
7 allocations (16 for mule deer and 30 for elk), and formally recognizing subsistence hunting as a
8 purpose. The motion recommends adopting amendments to OAR 635-800-0015 to implement
9 these updates.

10
11 *This presentation is located in the commission material and can be viewed at*
12 https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-01/Ex%20B_Presentation.pdf

13
14 No Public Testimony
15 Action:

16 Commissioner Morrison moved to adopt amendments to OAR 635-800-0015 as proposed by staff
17 in Attachment 3. Commissioner Moldal seconded the motion, and the motion was carried seven
18 (7) in favor; Wahl, Hatfield-Hyde; Labhart, Spelbrink, Hall Defrees, Morrison, Moldal

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20 **EXHIBIT C: LANDOWNER PREFERENCE PROGRAM FORMULA FOR SETTING MULE DEER**
21 **TAGS**

22 The Commission amended rules to modify the formula for setting landowner preference
23 program tags for mule deer hunts and to modify the names of some mule deer herd ranges.

24 *Commission Action: Rulemaking*

25 Brian Wolfer, Deputy Administrator Wildlife Division
26 Lee Foster, District Wildlife Biologist.

27
28 Presentation: Brian and Lee provided the Commission with a presentation outlining the
29 Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Landowner Preference (LOP) program for mule deer
30 tags, which provides controlled hunt tags to landowners for use on their property. Originally
31 established in 1981, the program evolved through legislative changes, including a 2013
32 requirement to limit tags when populations fall below management goals. The current formula
33 uses a three-tier system based on population levels relative to management objectives, but a
34 proposed revision simplifies this to two tiers: Tier 1 for moderate or low concern areas (or >75%
35 private land) with tags allocated by acreage, and Tier 2 for high-concern areas with limits of 15%
36 of controlled tags or five tags. The changes aim to align with the 2024 Mule Deer Plan, provide
37 stability for landowners, and slightly increase antlerless LOP tags. Implementation begins for
38 2026 hunts, with evaluation after two to three years, alongside herd range name changes for
39 clarity and consistency with regulations.

40
41 *This presentation is located in the commission material and can be viewed at*
42 https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-01/Ex%20C_Presentation.pdf

43
44 Public Testimony

M.T. Anderson,	Landowner
William Ray Jr.,	The Klamath Tribes
Don Gentry,	The Klamath Tribes
Shane Gomes,	Oregon Cattlemen’s Association
Tyler Dugannon,	Oregon Hunters Association
Scott Hess,	Landowner

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2 Action:

3 Commissioner Moldal moved to amend OAR Chapter 635, Divisions 075 and 190 as proposed by
4 staff. Commissioner Morrison seconded the motion and the motion was carried: six (6) in favor;
5 Wahl, Hatfield-Hyde; Labhart, Hall Defrees, Morrison, Moldal; one (1) abstained; Spelbrink,
6

7 **EXHIBIT D: COQUILLE RIVER FALL CHINOOK CONSERVATION HATCHERY PROGRAM**
8 **MODIFICATION**

9 The Commission approved a modification to the Coquille River conservation hatchery
10 program.

11 *Commission Action: Approval*

12 Greg Huchko, Umpqua Watershed District Manager

13 John Ogan, Coquille Indian Tribe
14

15 Presentation: Greg and John provided the Commission with a presentation outlining the
16 Coquille River Fall Chinook Conservation Hatchery Program, which was initiated in 2022 to
17 prevent extirpation, conserve genetic diversity, and increase abundance of fall Chinook salmon.
18 They reviewed limiting factors such as invasive bass species and warming trends, and
19 management actions including habitat restoration, harvest restrictions, and hatchery efforts. The
20 conservation program uses wild broodstock and releases marked smolts to the upper basin but
21 faces challenges due to low wild fish returns and difficulty meeting abundance goals. To address
22 this, the recommendation was to allow incorporation of hatchery-origin broodstock, supported
23 by genetic analysis showing no population differentiation from wild fish, while continuing to use
24 wild brood when available. This adaptive approach aligns with existing policies and conservation
25 plans.
26

27 *This presentation is located in the commission material and can be viewed at*

28 [https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-
29 01/Exhibit%20D_Presentation_Coquille%20River%20Fall%20Chinook%20Conservation%20Hatche
30 ry%20Program%20Modification.pdf](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-01/Exhibit%20D_Presentation_Coquille%20River%20Fall%20Chinook%20Conservation%20Hatchery%20Program%20Modification.pdf)
31

32 No Public Testimony

33 Action:

34 Commissioner Hatfield-Hyde: moved to approve the Department to include hatchery origin
35 broodstock as part of the Coquille Fall Chinook Conservation Hatchery Program. Commissioner
36 Spelbrink seconded the motion and the motion was carried: six (6) in favor; Hatfield-Hyde;
37 Labhart, Spelbrink, Hall Defrees, Morrison, Moldal; One (1) opposed; Wahl
38

39 Chair Wahl adjourned the meeting at 12:32 p.m.