



Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission Minutes

Tour:
Thursday April 23, 2026, 8:00 AM
Shearwater Inn
120 Inlet Court
Lincoln City, OR 97367

Meeting:
Friday April 24, 2026:00 AM
Lincoln City Cultural Center
540 NE Hwy 101
Lincoln City, OR 97367

1

2 Commission minutes are considered draft until approved by the Commission.

3

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

6

Friday, April 24, 2026

7

8

Table with 2 columns listing names and titles of attendees: 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, 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; Anika Marriott, Assistant Attorney General; Erin Donald, Assistant Attorney General.

9

MEETING

10

11

12 On Friday, April 24, 2026, at 8:00 AM, Chair Wahl called the Oregon Fish and Wildlife
13 Commission (the Commission) meeting to order.

14

15 Commissioner Hatfield – Hyde was excused for a portion of this meeting.

16

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

17

18 Field Reports – in written form only; this report is available in the meeting materials and at
19 https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Field%20Report%20April%202026.pdf

20

Expenditure Report

21

Ken Loffink, Chief Operating Officer

22

23

24 Ken reported that as of February 28, 2026, ODFW held a total cash balance of \$149.1 million,
25 with \$58.0 million in unrestricted funds (including \$17 million in Rock Creek Hatchery insurance
26 proceeds) and \$91.1 million in restricted funds. True unrestricted cash totaled \$41.0 million after
27 excluding insurance proceeds, reflecting a \$10 million decline from the prior month due to large

1 scheduled payments and pending federal reimbursements. Overall, agency expenditures are  
2 tracking as expected for the 2025–27 biennium, with 24.19% of authorized expenditures used at  
3 33% of the biennium. Revenue from recreational license sales continues to perform strongly, up  
4 28% in sales and 11% in products sold compared to 2025. Budget development for the 2027–29  
5 biennium is underway, including public budget open houses, coordination with DAS CFO and the  
6 Governor’s Office, and refinement of policy option packages.

7  
8 *This report is available in the meeting materials and at*  
9 [https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Commission%20Financial%20Report%20April%202026.pdf)  
10 [04/Commission%20Financial%20Report%20April%202026.pdf](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Commission%20Financial%20Report%20April%202026.pdf)

### 11 **CLIMATE & OCEAN CHANGE POLICY REPORT**

12 Building Resilient Landscapes: Oregon's 20-Year Landscape Resiliency Strategy at Work  
13 Oregon Department of Forestry

14  
15  
16 *This report is available in the meeting materials and at*  
17 [https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Climate%20Change%20Report_Landscape%20Resiliency.pdf)  
18 [04/Climate%20Change%20Report\\_Landscape%20Resiliency.pdf](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Climate%20Change%20Report_Landscape%20Resiliency.pdf)

### 19 **ANNUAL WOLF REPORT**

20  
21 Roblyn Brown, Wolf Coordinator  
22 Derek Broman, Game Program Manager  
23 Brian Wolfer, Wildlife Division Deputy Administrator  
24 Lt. Schwartz, Oregon State Police  
25 Nick Myatt, East Region Manager

#### 26 Invited Panels:

27 Panel 1 – Wolf Population Management, Wallowa County

28 John Hillick, Commissioner

29 John Williams, Wallow County Livestock Growers Association

30 Jim Akinson, Oregon Hunters Association

31 Panel 2 – Reducing Conflict and Oregon Compensation Program

32 Jake Seavert, Union Conty Commissioner

33 Joseph Vail, Defenders of Wildlife

34 Hunter Newharth, Crook Co. Wolf Compensation & Depredation

35 Ellie Gage, Western Landowners Alliance

36 Sunny Summers, Oregon Dept of Agriculture

37 Sristi Kamal, Western Environmental Law Center

38  
39 The 2025 Oregon Wolf Annual Report highlights continued growth in the state’s wolf population,  
40 which increased 13% to an estimated 230 wolves across 30 packs and 23 breeding pairs,  
41 supported by extensive monitoring including radio-collars, remote cameras, and more than  
42 20,000 wolf location data points collected.

1 While wolf numbers and range continued their long-term expansion, the report also notes  
2 increases in livestock depredations and a corresponding rise in authorized wolf removals,  
3 particularly in the East Wolf Management Zone, which saw the majority of the 42 total  
4 mortalities recorded in 2025.

5  
6 ODFW’s implementation priorities focused on addressing illegal take, enhancing population  
7 monitoring—including moving toward an integrated population model—and reducing  
8 wolf-livestock conflict through proactive deterrence, producer assistance, partnerships, and  
9 expanded on-the-ground support.

10  
11 *This report is available in the meeting materials and at*  
12 [https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/2025%20Commission%20Wolf%20Annual%20Report%20Presentation%204-24-26.pdf)  
13 [04/2025%20Commission%20Wolf%20Annual%20Report Presentation 4-24-26.pdf](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/2025%20Commission%20Wolf%20Annual%20Report%20Presentation%204-24-26.pdf)  
14

### 15 **ADOPT TEMPORARY RULES**

16 The Commission ratified the following temporary rules. The eight (8) temporary rules were  
17 previously adopted by the director under her emergency action authority.

18 1.) 635-042-0145

19 Modify Youngs Bay Select Area Commercial Fishery

20 Adopted: 3/23/2026 Effective Dates: 3/23/2026 through 7/31/2026

21 These rules expand the open area for two previously adopted fishing periods in the Youngs  
22 Bay Commercial Salmon Fishery scheduled to occur from March 23 through March 25.

23 Modifications are consistent with actions taken by the Department of Fish and Wildlife on  
24 3/23/26.

25  
26 2.) 635-042-0145

27 Modify Youngs Bay Select Area Commercial Fishery

28 Adopted: 3/25/2026 Effective Dates: 3/26/2026 through 7/31/2026

29 These rules expand the open area for two previously adopted fishing periods in the Youngs  
30 Bay Commercial Salmon Fishery scheduled to occur from March 26 through March 30.

31 Modifications are consistent with actions taken by the Department of Fish and Wildlife on  
32 3/25/26.

33  
34 3.) 635-042-0145

35 Modify Youngs Bay Select Area Commercial Fishery

36 Adopted: 3/31/2026 Effective Dates: 4/1/2026 through 7/31/2026

37 This rule expands the open area for previously adopted fishing periods in the Youngs Bay  
38 Commercial Salmon Fishery scheduled to occur from April 1 through April 2. Modifications  
39 are consistent with actions taken by the Department of Fish and Wildlife on 3/31/26.

40  
41 4.) 635-018-0090

42 Lower Deschutes River Hatchery Spring Chinook Season

43 Adopted: 4/2/2026 Effective Dates: 5/5/2026 through 9/28/2026

1 This rule is needed to allow sport harvest opportunities for returning hatchery spring  
2 Chinook salmon in the Lower Deschutes River for an approximate two-week period  
3 beginning May 5, 2026.  
4

5 5.) 635-041-0020

6 Modify the Annual Closure Period for Treaty Subsistence Fishing in the Fifteenmile Creek  
7 Sanctuary

8 Adopted: 4/7/2026 Effective Dates: 4/16/2026 through 6/15/2026

9 Under permanent rule, the closure date for treaty subsistence fishing around the mouth of  
10 Fifteenmile Creek extends from November 16 through June 15, annually. This amended  
11 rule allows subsistence fishing in this area to resume on April 16, 2026, to allow access to  
12 spring Chinook.  
13

14 6.) 635-023-0125

15 Set Additional Days for the Recreational Spring Salmon Fishery in the Columbia River

16 Adopted: 4/10/2026 Effective Dates: 4/11/2026 through 6/15/2026

17 This amended rule sets Columbia River recreational spring salmon fisheries and modifies  
18 the daily bag limit for Select Area recreational salmon fisheries from March 1 through June  
19 15. Modifications are consistent with actions taken by the Departments of Fish and Wildlife  
20 for the States of Oregon and Washington on February 19 and April 9, 2026.  
21

22 7.) 635-023-0125

23 Set an Additional Day for the Recreational Spring Salmon Fishery in the Columbia River

24 Adopted: 4/15/2026 Effective Dates: 4/18/2026 through 6/15/2026

25 This amended rule adds one day to the Columbia River recreational spring  
26 salmon/steelhead fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam. Modifications are consistent  
27 with actions taken by the Departments of Fish and Wildlife for the States of Oregon and  
28 Washington at a Columbia River Joint State hearing held on April 14, 2026.  
29

30 8.) 635-042-0145

31 Modifying Youngs Bay Select Area Commercial Fishery

32 Adopted: 4/17/2026 Effective Dates: 4/20/2026 through 7/31/2026

33 This amended rule expands the open area for the previously adopted fishing period in the  
34 Youngs Bay Commercial Salmon Fishery scheduled to occur on April 20. Modifications are  
35 consistent with actions taken by the Department of Fish and Wildlife on 04/16/26.  
36

37 Action: Approval

38 Commissioner Spelbrink moved to ratify the eight (8) temporary rules set forth on the April  
39 24, 2026, agenda. Commissioner Moldal seconded the motion, and the motion carried  
40 unanimously, seven (7) in favor. Wahl, Hatfield-Hyde; Labhart, Spelbrink, Morrison, Moldal,  
41 Hall Defrees  
42

43 **COMMISSION UPDATES**

44 **OTHER BUSINESS**

1 **PUBLIC FORUM**

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

4  
5 *Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan,*  
6 *Alma Rosie Sanchez, Nez Perce Tribe*

7  
8 *The annual wolf report*  
9 *Bethany Cotton, Conservation Director for Cascadia Wildlands*

10  
11 *State and federal agency killing of wolves in Oregon*  
12 *Amaroq Weiss, Center for Biological Diversity*

13  
14 *Youngs Bay Closure*  
15 *Bill Monroe Jr.*

16  
17 *The annual wolf report*  
18 *Story Waren, Humane World for Animals*

19  
20 **Exhibit A: COMMISSION MINUTES**

21 Action:

22 Commissioner Hall Defrees moved to approve March 20, 2026, meeting minutes with  
23 continued authority to correct grammar and punctuation. Commissioner Morrison seconded the  
24 motion, and the motion was carried seven (7) in favor; Wahl, Hatfield-Hyde, Labhart, Spelbrink,  
25 Hall Defrees, Morrison, Moldal,

26  
27 **Exhibit B: 2026-27 GAME BIRD HUNTING REGULATIONS**

28 The Commission adopted the game bird season regulations for 2026-27.

29 *Commission Action: Rulemaking*

30 Brandon Reishus, Migratory Game Bird Coordinator  
31 Mikal Cline, Upland Game Bird Coordinator

32  
33 Mikal and Brandon proposed 2026–27 game bird hunting regulations, including upland, sage-  
34 grouse, and migratory bird seasons. They reviewed recent harvest trends, population status, and  
35 production forecasts for species such as grouse, quail, pheasant, partridge, and sage-grouse,  
36 noting generally stable frameworks with minor date adjustments. Sage-grouse population  
37 indicators are mixed, with a 17.8% spring population increase but below-average chick  
38 production; the recommendation is to maintain controlled hunt permit levels to keep harvest  
39 below 2% of the fall population. Migratory bird proposals include adjustments to duck season  
40 opening dates, white-fronted goose bag limits, and a reduced September Canada goose season  
41 in the Northwest Permit Zone.

42  
43 *This presentation is located in the commission material and can be viewed at*  
44 [https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Exhibit%20B\\_Presentation.pdf](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Exhibit%20B_Presentation.pdf)

1 Public Testimony

Michael List

Worth Mathewson

Tyler Dungannon, Oregon Hunters Association

2  
3 Action:

4 Commissioner Spelbrink moved to adopt regulations for 2026-27 game bird hunting  
5 seasons, amend rules for department owned lands, and OAR Chapter 635, Divisions 008, 045,  
6 051, 052, 053, 054, and 060 as proposed by staff and shown in Attachments 3 and 4.

7 Commissioner Morrison seconded the motion and the motion was carried six (6) in favor;  
8 Hatfield-Hyde, Labhart, Spelbrink, Hall Defrees, Morrison, Moldal. One (1) opposed; Wahl  
9

10 **Exhibit C: 2026 SPORT AND COMMERCIAL PACIFIC HALIBUT REGULATIONS**

11 The Commission adopted the 2026 sport and commercial fishery regulations for Pacific halibut.

12 *Commission Action: Rulemaking*

13 Melanie Bukovec, Groundfish & Halibut Asst Project Leader

14 Christian Heath, Halibut Project Leader

15 Lynn Mattes, Marine Fisheries Management Section Leader  
16

17 Melanie outlined the proposed 2026 Pacific halibut fishery regulations, including adoption of  
18 quotas, season dates, and management measures for both recreational and commercial  
19 fisheries. Highlighting the Catch Sharing Plan for 2026, noting allocations of 297,297 pounds for  
20 Oregon recreational fisheries and 261,211 pounds for coastwide directed commercial fisheries,  
21 with seasons beginning as early as April 30 and June 23, respectively. Staff recommend adopting  
22 federal rules by reference—covering harvest levels, sport and commercial season dates, and the  
23 2026 Catch Sharing Plan.  
24

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

26 [https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Exhibit%20C Presentation.pdf](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Exhibit%20C%20Presentation.pdf)  
27

28 No Public Testimony  
29

30 Action:

31 Commissioner Hall Defrees moved to amend OAR Chapter 635 Divisions 004 and 039 rules  
32 for the 2026 recreational and commercial Pacific halibut fisheries as shown in Attachment 3.

33 Commissioner Spelbrink seconded the motion, and the motion was carried seven (7) in favor;  
34 Wahl, Hatfield-Hyde, Labhart, Spelbrink, Hall Defrees, Morrison, Moldal,  
35

36 **EXHIBIT D: 2026 OCEAN SALMON FISHERIES REGULATIONS**

37 The Commission adopted rules establishing regulations for recreational and commercial salmon  
38 fishing seasons in state-managed waters of the Pacific Ocean.

39 *Commission Action: Rulemaking*

40 Christine Mallette, Ocean Salmon Technical Services Manager

1 Presentation: Christine provided the Commission with a presentation outlining the proposed  
2 2026 ocean salmon regulations, developed through the Pacific Fishery Management Council's  
3 annual process, which emphasizes public involvement, conservation, and compliance with federal  
4 ESA requirements. Detailing management criteria such as exploitation rate limits and escapement  
5 goals for key salmon stocks, provides projected 2026 performance relative to those constraints,  
6 and presents the season structures for commercial and recreational fisheries across Oregon  
7 coastal management areas.

8  
9 *This presentation is located in the commission material and can be viewed at*  
10 [https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Exhibit%20D\\_Presentation.pdf](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Exhibit%20D_Presentation.pdf) '

11  
12 Public Testimony

Nick Saba, High Class Tackle Co.  
Conrad Gowell, Wild Fish Conservancy

13  
14 Action:

15 Commissioner Spelbrink moved amend OAR 635 Divisions 003 and 013 as proposed by  
16 staff in Attachment 3. Commissioner Hall Defrees seconded the motion, and the motion was  
17 carried seven (7) in favor; Wahl, Hatfield-Hyde, Labhart, Spelbrink, Hall Defrees, Morrison,  
18 Moldal.

19  
20 **EXHIBIT E: SAUVIE ISLAND BEACHES PARKING PERMIT**

21 The Commission adopted rules creating a new Sauvie Island Beaches Parking Permit

22 *Action: Rulemaking*

23 Steve Niemala, North Willamette Watershed District Manager  
24 Luke Schwartz, Lieutenant Oregon State Police

25  
26 Steve provided the Commission with a presentation outlining the ongoing challenges and  
27 proposed solutions for managing heavy summer visitation at Sauvie Island beaches within the  
28 Sauvie Island Wildlife Area, emphasizing the impacts of overcrowding on wildlife habitat, public  
29 safety, and emergency access. Steve reviewed the success of the 2025 pilot program; such as  
30 reduced congestion, maintained emergency access, and improved visitor experience, while also  
31 noting public confusion around permitting and signage. To address persistent issues, ODFW  
32 proposed updated rules creating a limited, seasonal Sauvie Island Beaches Parking Permit for  
33 weekends and holidays between June 15 and Labor Day at high-use beaches, enabling better  
34 control of vehicle numbers. The plan for 2026 includes expanded public outreach, staffing,  
35 continued checkpoint operations on Reeder Road, and implementation of the revised permit  
36 structure.

37  
38 *This presentation is located in the commission material and can be viewed at*  
39 [https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Exhibit%20E\\_Presentation.pdf](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Exhibit%20E_Presentation.pdf)

40  
41 Public Testimony

Kristen Cook, Sauvie Island Cove Market

Dione Burchell, Reeder Beach Campground & Country Store  
Marlin J Leno  
Chris Lake, Sauvie Island Fire District  
Keely Nudo, Sauvie Island Resident

1  
2 Action:

3 Commissioner Moldal moved to adopt modified proposed changes to OAR 653-008-0053  
4 and 653-008-0147 as shown in the PowerPoint presented on April 24th, 2026. Commissioner  
5 Spelbrink seconded the motion, and the motion was carried seven (7) in favor; Wahl, Hatfield-  
6 Hyde, Labhart, Spelbrink, Morrison, Moldal, Hall Defrees

7  
8 **EXHIBIT F: PROPERTY SALE ON ALSEA RIVER**

9 The Commission approved the sale of property on the Alsea River.

10 *Commission Action: Approval*

11 Holly Huchko, Sport Fish Restoration Coordinator

12 Mike Gauvin, West Region Manager

13  
14 Holly provided a presentation regarding the acquisition of the Don Lindly property along the  
15 Alsea River, purchased by ODFW in 2014 to support river access near the Port of Alsea Marina.  
16 The property provides a public bank-fishing area, an undeveloped launch for small watercraft,  
17 and a popular day-use site. Since acquiring the property, ODFW's partner in the acquisition,  
18 Lincoln County, has determined there is no longer support to develop the site for motorized boat  
19 access, a condition of using federal money for the acquisition. Given this change, ODFW and  
20 partners agreed to a sale of the property to the County who have committed to maintaining  
21 public access at the site. ODFW staff recommended approving the sale of the property to the  
22 county to ensure continued public benefit and allow the Department to refund the USFWS for the  
23 original purchase so the funds could be used at other boating access sites.

24  
25 *This presentation is located in the commission material and can be viewed at*  
26 [https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Exhibit%20F Presentation.pdf](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Exhibit%20F%20Presentation.pdf)

27 No Public Testimony

28 Approval

29  
30 Action:

31 Commissioner Hall Defrees moved to approve the sale of the Don Lindly property to  
32 Lincoln County. Commissioner Morrison seconded the motion, and the motion was carried five  
33 (5) in favor; Wahl, Labhart, Morrison, Moldal, Hall Defrees; one (1) opposed Spelbrink; one (1)  
34 absent Hatfield-Hyde

35  
36 **EXHIBIT G: PRIVATE FOREST ACCORD PROJECT APPROVAL ROUND 3**

37 The Commission approved funding of board recommended projects.

38 *Commission Action: Approval*

39 Andy Spyrka, Private Forest Accord Grant Coordinator

40 Sarah Reif, Habitat Division Administrator

1  
2 Andy provided a presentation outlining the Private Forest Accord Grant Program, created through  
3 a 2021 agreement between conservation and timber groups to support aquatic resource  
4 protection and habitat conservation across Oregon. For the 2025 grant cycle, ODFW recommends  
5 funding 25 projects totaling \$10.5 million, leveraging more than \$12 million in matching funds, to  
6 improve fish passage, restore streams and wetlands, enhance beaver-modified landscapes, and  
7 support a new water-transactions category. With 80 proposals requesting over \$39 million, the  
8 selected projects represent the most impactful conservation opportunities identified by the  
9 Advisory Committee.

10  
11 *This presentation is located in the commission material and can be viewed at*  
12 [https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Exhibit%20G\\_Presentation.pdf](https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-04/Exhibit%20G_Presentation.pdf)

13 No Public Testimony

14  
15 Action:

16 Commissioner Moldal moved to approve the 25 projects recommended for funding by the  
17 Private Forest Accord Grant Program Advisory Committee as described in Attachment 5, with the  
18 provision that Department Staff may make administrative adjustments to project budgets, not to  
19 exceed 10%. Commissioner Labhart seconded the motion, and the motion was carried six (6) in  
20 favor; Wahl, Labhart, Spelbrink, Morrison, Moldal, Hall Defrees; one (1) absent - Hatfield-Hyde

21  
22 **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

23 An Executive Session was held pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(f) to consider information  
24 or records that are exempt by law from public inspection, as well as to consult with legal  
25 counsel concerning legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current  
26 litigation or litigation likely to be filed as authorized by ORS 192.660(2)(h). The executive  
27 session was closed to the public.

28  
29 Chair Wahl adjourned the meeting at 4:39 p.m.