

Exhibit B

**Supplemental
Public Correspondence Received as of
June 23, 2026**

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Alan LHommedieu <civinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2026 11:46 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

I am writing you to urge you to reject the rebuilding of the Rock Creek Hatchery. Spending millions of dollars to rebuild this hatchery would be a very poor investment of scarce funds. The best way to improve the steelhead runs on the N. Umpqua would be to remove Winchester Dam and invest in projects in the N. Umpqua basin that would improve the health of the watershed. This would create local jobs and boost the number of fish returning.

Sincerely,

Alan LHommedieu

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Sincerely,

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BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Ken Morrish <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2026 11:46 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

Please do not allocate funds to rebuild the Rock Creek Hatchery on the North Umpqua. The river and the lovers of the river will fare far better by simply letting the wild fish populations do their thing. Nothing is broken, just let nature do what it does best. The tax payers, friends of the river and the fish will all thank you!

Sincerely,

Ken Morrish

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

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Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2026 11:46 AM
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Sincerely,

Ken Morrish

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: James Andras <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2026 11:47 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

Thank you for taking time to consider my comments. I ask that you reject the Rock Creek Hatchery rebuild as ODFW's own statewide resiliency assessment ranked it dead last among all state-owned hatcheries for economic benefit, climate resilience, and infrastructure cost. Moreover, Oregon has already proven there is a better way. The coastal Coho comeback showed that investing in habitat and wild fish produces lasting returns for fish, habitat, and local economies.

Finally, Jeff Dose, retired fisheries biologist, called the North Umpqua "a unique and rare treasure. It is the home waters to most diverse assemblage of sea run and resident fish species in the entire Oregon Coast. There are six distinct populations of salmon and steelhead, including entirely wild summer and winter steelhead runs. Protection and enhancement will require our continued efforts to address stressors such as land and water uses, Rock Creek Hatchery, and passage at Winchester Dam."

I urge you to invest in monitoring programs and habitat restoration that has already proven to lead to wild abundance in Oregon.

Sincerely,

James Andras

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

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Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2026 11:47 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
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James Andras

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Erin McGarry <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2026 11:47 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

Time and time again, it's been proven that hatcheries aren't the solution. The North Umpqua is world famous for it's beautiful surroundings and its wild steelhead. I have traveled across the country to stand in it's storied waters, just to have a chance at catching a wild anadromous fish. If asked the question, what do you think people would rather catch?

To think we as humans can possibly replicate what millions of years of evolution has created is our ego talking. All the wild ones need is a chance and a healthy habitat. They know what to do. They require our support. And you can give them better odds without a hatchery program. You have this golden opportunity to create a lasting legacy. What do you want your legacy to be?

I implore you to invest in habitat restoration, reduce the reliance on hatcheries, and build a sustainable wild fishery. The North Umpqua deserves nothing less than the best.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Erin

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Travis Woodward <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:16 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of

Plesae reject the Rock Creek Hatchery POP! Please do not put this pointless financial burden on Oregon tax payers!! As a local of the community, I KNOW Rock Creek will never be able to supply the cool water needed to support the rearing of fish. And the money needed to cool that water is not worth the return it would be supporting.

Sincerely,

Travis E. Woodward

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Redginald Heth <civinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:16 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

Do not spend money on a Rock Creek Hatchery that will harm wild fish. Use that money to restore habitat and prioritize wild fish.

Sincerely,

Redginald Heth, Grants Pass, Oregon

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Dan Robinhold <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:17 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

As a long term fisher of the North Umpqua, I feel that the fishery would be best helped by not renewing or rebuilding the Rock Creek Hatchery. The dollars saved both from the construction and staff salaries would be more productively used supporting your already excellent fish biologists and their local and regional projects.

Sincerely,

Dan Robinhold

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Walter Tingle <civinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:17 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

I'm firmly against the rebuilding the Rock Creek Hatchery. Please put the effort and money into rebuilding wild fish numbers.

Sincerely,

Walter Tingle

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Brian Emerick <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:17 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

We need to focus our limited resources on wild fish recovery and resilience in the Umpqua River. These fish are the legacy that we are responsible for passing down to future generations.

The Rock Creek Hatchery has been shown to be a failure and does not merit rebuilding. In addition to the capital to recreate something that was unsuccessful in the first place, there will be ongoing expenses to manage and maintain it. Given past experience and current evidence, there is simply no way we can justify this losing investment. Instead, I strongly encourage that whatever resources we can muster be put into recovering this amazing fishery.

Sincerely,

Brian Emerick

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Tyler Greene <civinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:17 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

I live, fish and spend a lot of my free time on the North Umpqua and one of the greatest things about it, are it's WILD steelhead. Besides being a waste of money, the hatchery approach is a sort sighted solution and detrimental to wild fish in the long term. Having the opportunity to fish for a wild steelhead fresh from the ocean 12 months out of the year on this river is amazing and not one that every river system gets. The hatchery program would change that. Hatchery fish pollute wild fish genetics and affect run times. With global warming, hot summers and low water it's more important than ever to have a large genetic pool so these fish can survive. Wild PNW steelhead are resilient and have been around for thousands of years and will find a way to do so in the future but not by hatchery programs.

I may not have had many encounters swinging flies for these wild fish but the ones that I have had have been extremely profound and emotional, it's given me a deep respect for their journey and I would like it to continue for thousands of more years.

Thank you for reading and your time.

Sincerely,

Tyler Greene

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Robert Hurley <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:17 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

Please reject the Rock Creek Hatchery POP. It is the lowest performing hatchery facility in Oregon. Oregon has already proven that investing in habitat and wild fish as it did with coastal coho produces lasting returns for fish, communities, and local economies.

Sincerely,

Robert Hurley

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Mark Stromme <civinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:17 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

There is nothing better than a river filled with wild fish only, who know how to respond to a fly, and know how to reproduce and repopulate a depleted stock. Why spend money on a hatchery program that we know does not work, and will only harm the native fish that otherwise can do the job themselves, and without the expense?

This is a big solid no to the hatchery rebuild, please, and lets work together to get Winchester Dam removed to help the situation.

Sincerely,

Mark Stromme

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: James Cox <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:17 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

Please vote to reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild. This is a needless use of taxpayer and ODFW dollars for a river system that should be managed exclusively for wild fish in its upper reaches.

Sincerely,

James Cox

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Brian Oliver <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:17 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

Please do not vote for funding the Rock Creek hatchery. It would be a waste of millions of dollars that could be better spent on habitat protection/restoration and other means of protecting our wild fish.

Sincerely,

Brian Oliver

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Richard Harrington <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:17 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

Please vote against the Rock Creek Hatchery proposal. The funds proposed to be spent would be more responsibly used on wild fish monitoring and habitat protection and restoration.

Sincerely,

Richard Harrington

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Lee Lashway <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:17 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

I am writing to strongly oppose the waste of taxpayers' money on rebuilding the Rock Creek Hatchery on the North Umpqua. The proposal is ill-formed, ill-advised, and, at this point, poorly vetted for long term consequences. With the State in a budgetary crisis, it is long past time for ODFW and other state agencies to stop expenditures for unwise projects. There is no resource justification for bringing this hatchery back online.

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Mark Stangeland <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:17 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

Rock Creek is the least resilient and most costly facility in the system. ODFW's own statewide resiliency assessment ranked Rock Creek dead last among 14 state hatcheries for economic benefit, climate resilience, and infrastructure cost. Rebuilding it ignores the \$1 million analysis Oregonians already paid for.

2. This decision is premature. ODFW is asking the Commission to commit tens of millions of dollars before the Coastal Multi-Species Conservation and Management Plan (CMP) review — the process meant to guide wild fish management and hatchery investments in this basin — is complete. Don't put the cart before the horse.

3. The funding isn't there, and the long-term costs will likely fall on the state. ODFW has not provided a total cost estimate, has not identified a funding source, has not evaluated a no-build alternative, and has not secured a dedicated source of funding for the long-term operating and maintenance costs.

4. This is a test of good governance. Responsible leadership means making sure the facts are clear before moving forward. Advancing a contingent, unfunded request asks the Governor, the Legislature, and the public to treat a hope as a plan. The Commission should demand a complete picture before approving this proposal.

5. The North Umpqua is a prime opportunity to invest in what actually works to restore abundant fish and sustain fisheries. The coastal Coho comeback proved that habitat restoration and wild fish-focused management produce lasting returns. The Umpqua Basin deserves that same investment, not a rebuild of the lowest-performing hatchery in Oregon's system.

Please do the right thing here.

Respectfully,

Mark Stangeland

North Umpqua special use permit holder fly fishing guide and lover of wild places.

TO: Chair Mary Wahl and Members of the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
FROM: Chris Daughters, Caddis Fly Shop, Eugene, Oregon.
DATE: June 22, 2026

RE: Written Testimony RE: Agency Request Budget - Oppose

I have been a big supporter of the 1.25% for Wildlife Transient Lodging Tax and Caddis Fly Shop has supported this measure, and has advocated for its passage in our community. We believe that the State should be doing everything it can to help support imperiled fish, wildlife and habitat recovery efforts. *2026 marks our 51st year in business and Caddis Fly Shop relies on wild fish populations. Anglers fish in Oregon and travel to Oregon for a chance to catch one of our spectacular wild fish. Protecting and enhancing Oregon's wild fish is why I support WTLT.*

I am concerned to see some of your plans when it comes to implementing this bill through the Agency Request Budget. In particular I believe ODFW's plans to use some of this TLT funding on hatchery-based Chinook production for Orcas (\$500k of it) is misguided and should be significantly reevaluated, for the following reasons:

1. Setting a precedent to use TLT to fund hatchery staff and infrastructure goes against the idea that the 1% for Wildlife funding would be used for habitat recovery and modern and sustainable practices. Hatchery facilities really are about supporting fishery augmentation (and the fact that these fish are ad clipped means they will be contributing to the harvest fishery). It sends a very dangerous signal for future years that TLT can be utilized as another source of significant funding for hatchery budget needs, which already cannibalize the agency's budget (nearly \$100 million plus additional bond for hatchery infrastructure upgrades this current biennium) The department has received significant bond revenues for hatchery upgrades in the last several legislative sessions, and will be seeking another, even more substantial request this coming session. Allocating TLT funds to hatchery budget needs right out of the gate like this will send a signal to legislators and stakeholders that this is a legitimate source of funding for hatchery staff and infrastructure.
2. Allocating \$500k to Orca production likely won't substantively help Orcas in the first place. The documented survival rate of juvenile Chinook is .5-2% at the Trask and .1-1% at Cedar Creek. On the high end, 170k juveniles would yield less than 4,000 adults. If every fish goes to an Orca (highly unlikely), it would feed the pod for about 2 days. Is this the best way for the state to help these animals in the long run?
3. Oregon is in a different position than Puget Sound (where 20-30 million juvenile hatchery CHS are being produced for prey supplementation) when it comes to available strategies for supporting the conservation and recovery of SRKWs. Puget Sound has much less opportunity for habitat restoration for spring Chinook

than Oregon. Anglers from far and wide are impressed with habitat restoration efforts I show them while on the water. Mother nature is our best hatchery and utilizing TLT funds for habitat enhancement is the very best way forward.

4. Instead of further funding hatcheries, we should be focused on supporting sustainable, wild chinook production by bolstering our wild populations via habitat restoration and production, reducing hatchery impacts on springer populations, improving habitat access, and reducing/managing ocean harvest of Chinook. *I have seen first hand how habitat enhancement can improve Chinook spawning on the McKenzie River and tributaries. The downstream effects on not only salmon, but trout, invertebrates and birdlife benefits are visible to me every time I am near these restoration zones.*
5. The TLT money could be utilized instead to develop a CHS strategic action plan on the Oregon Coast in the same vein as was done for coho. If the department wants to get money on the ground this biennium in support of Spring Chinook, then look at the projects that have already been ID'd in the Coho SAPs that can also concurrently support Spring Chinook populations.

I truly hope that you can take my comments to heart and have an honest conversation about the best use of the 1% for Wildlife fundings. Citizens and the businesses that rely on our vibrant fisheries, and wildlife-based tourism are all excited about the long-term sustainable impacts that this funding can have on the future of Oregon wildlife, but a lot depends on ODFW's specific and deliberate decisions to deploy these funds against the right programs.

Signed,

Chris Daughters

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Caddis Fly Angling Shop <chris@caddisflyshop.com>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 12:50 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: RE: Written Testimony RE: Agency Request Budget - Oppose
Attachments: Chris Daughters_Written Testimony_RE_ Written Testimony RE_ Agency Request Budget - Oppose_June 22 2026.docx

You don't often get email from chris@caddisflyshop.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Chair Mary Wahl and Members of the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission

Please find my attached Written Testimony RE: Agency Request Budget - Oppose

Thanks very much, I hope you all have a nice week.

Chris Daughters

chris@caddisflyshop.com
Caddisflyshop.com
168 West 6th ave
Eugene OR 97401

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Sally Compton <sally@thinkwildco.org>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 12:53 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Cc: alyssa@chintiminiwildlife.org; travis koons; Julie Collins; BlueMountainWildlife.org; Wildlife Center of the North Coast Astoria, OR
Subject: Public Comment Submission – Exhibit B: 2027–29 Agency Requested Budget (ARB) and HB 4134 Implementation
Attachments: RE_ HB 4134 Implementation_ Wildlife Rehabilitation Center Grant Program and Wildlife Coexistence Funding Priorities (3).pdf

You don't often get email from sally@thinkwildco.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

Attached please find a joint letter from Oregon's licensed wildlife rehabilitation centers regarding implementation of the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center Grant Program and Wildlife Coexistence Program funding under HB 4134 for consideration as part of Exhibit B: 2027–29 Agency Requested Budget (ARB) at the June 26, 2026 Commission meeting.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide recommendations and look forward to continuing to work with ODFW and the Commission to strengthen wildlife rehabilitation capacity, wildlife response coordination, and coexistence efforts across Oregon.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sally

Sally Compton

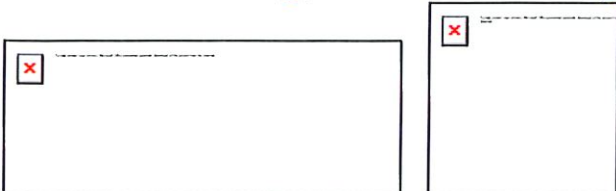
Executive Director

(541) 933-5437

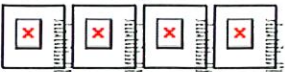
Think Wild Central Oregon - A Nonprofit Organization

[Watch our new video "Think Wild's Most Common Raptor Patient: The Great Horned Owl"](#)

www.thinkwildco.org | info@thinkwildco.org



"Inspiring our high desert community to care for and protect our native wildlife through education, conservation and rescue/rehabilitation."



June 22, 2026

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Commission

RE: HB 4134 Implementation: Wildlife Rehabilitation Center Grant Program and Wildlife Coexistence Funding Priorities

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

On behalf of Oregon's licensed wildlife rehabilitation centers, we appreciate the opportunity to provide recommendations regarding the development of the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center Grant Program and the allocation of Wildlife Coexistence Program funding under HB 4134.

Collectively, Oregon's licensed wildlife rehabilitation centers care for thousands of wildlife patients annually, respond to tens of thousands of wildlife hotline inquiries, educate the public, and provide wildlife response services across the state. The recommendations below were developed in response to our shared experiences working with Oregon's wildlife, agencies, and the public in order to strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration, coexistence efforts, and the welfare of our native species as a result of the dedicated funds secured by HB 4134.

We encourage the Commission to design the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center Grant Program in a manner that strengthens and sustains Oregon's statewide professional and permitted rehabilitation network through flexible, accessible, and predictable funding:

Prioritize Flexible Operating Support: We strongly recommend that the program prioritize flexible operating support, including funding for staffing, utilities, facility expenses, transportation, administrative costs, and other core operational needs.

Staffing and core operating expenses are often the greatest funding gap for rehabilitation centers and should be prioritized within the program. Grant funds should be eligible for both direct rehabilitation activities and the administrative and operational expenses necessary to deliver those services.

Recognize Wildlife Rehabilitation as an Essential Public Service: We encourage ODFW to evaluate rehabilitation centers based on the breadth of services provided rather than relying primarily on intake numbers or release rates.

Meaningful measures of impact may include:

- Geographic service area and regional wildlife coverage;
- Wildlife hotline response and public assistance;
- Renesting, reunification, and intake prevention efforts;
- Acceptance of rabies vector species and resource intensive species including small carnivores, waterfowl, and marine/pelagic species.
- Human-wildlife conflict mitigation services;

- Public education and outreach;
- Collaboration with ODFW and partner agencies.

Support Statewide Capacity and Coverage: Grant criteria should recognize the unique challenges faced by organizations serving large geographic regions, including rural areas and regions with limited wildlife rehabilitation capacity. Many centers provide care and support well beyond their immediate service area because alternative rehabilitation resources are unavailable, resulting in substantial transportation, travel, per diem, wildlife transport, and release-related expenses.

Additional consideration should be given to organizations maintaining capacity for rabies vector species and responding to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and other emerging wildlife health concerns, which require specialized facilities, staffing, training, and biosecurity measures.

The program should also support infrastructure improvements, equipment replacement, facility resilience, and other investments that strengthen long-term rehabilitation capacity.

Priority should be given to organizations holding current ODFW rehabilitation permits.

Create an Accessible and Predictable Grant Program: To maximize impact and reduce administrative burden, we recommend that the grant program:

- Provide multi-year funding commitments whenever possible;
- Prioritize upfront or advance funding mechanisms and avoid reimbursement-only structures, which can create significant financial barriers for wildlife rehabilitation centers operating with limited cash reserves;
- Avoid matching fund requirements;
- Clearly communicate eligibility requirements, allowable expenses, funding priorities, anticipated award amounts, and funding timelines;
- Maintain a straightforward application process with reasonable timelines;
- Minimize reporting burdens and ensure reporting requirements are proportional to award size and organizational capacity; and
- Utilize site visits and direct engagement opportunities to better understand the work being performed by rehabilitation centers.

Prioritize Early Investment in Existing Rehabilitation Capacity: We understand that implementation of HB 4134 will require ODFW to build internal staffing and administrative capacity over time. As these new agency positions and programs are established, we encourage the Commission to prioritize early investment in licensed wildlife rehabilitation centers during the initial phases of implementation.

Because rehabilitation centers are already providing these services, early investment in existing rehabilitation capacity would allow HB 4134 funding to produce immediate benefits for wildlife and communities while agency programs and staffing are developed.

In regard to Wildlife Coexistence and Stewardship funding, we encourage the Commission to dedicate a portion of these funds and associated staff capacity toward wildlife response training, coordination, and technical assistance efforts delivered in partnership with Oregon's licensed wildlife rehabilitation centers, which possess extensive expertise in injured, orphaned, and conflict wildlife response.

We encourage ODFW to support rehabilitation centers in partnering with ODFW staff, Oregon State Police, ODOT, dispatchers, academia, local governments, and other responding agencies through:

- Regional and species-specific training on injured, orphaned, and conflict wildlife response;
- Development and implementation of wildlife response protocols, including orphan assessment and reunification practices that prioritize keeping wildlife in the wild whenever appropriate;
- Human-wildlife conflict prevention and coexistence strategies that reduce unnecessary wildlife mortality and improve outcomes for both people and wildlife;
- Educational materials, response guidance, and technical assistance that help responding personnel understand available wildlife response options and local rehabilitation resources;
- Development and maintenance of public-facing wildlife coexistence resources, including website content, social media campaigns, educational materials, and wildlife response guidance that provide consistent, science-based information on common wildlife situations, orphaned wildlife, conflict prevention, and available rehabilitation resources;
- Workshops, coordination meetings, and information-sharing opportunities that strengthen communication and collaboration among agencies and rehabilitation centers; and
- After-action reviews and continuous learning opportunities that improve consistency, transparency, and decision-making in future wildlife response situations.

These investments would help ensure that wildlife response decisions are informed, timely, effective, and consistent across jurisdictions while strengthening coordination between responding agencies and Oregon's licensed wildlife rehabilitation centers.

These recommendations are consistent with the findings of the Wildlife Response Work Group and the original vision that helped shape Oregon's Wildlife Coexistence Program and ultimately HB 4134. The Wildlife Response Work Group identified the need for expanded training and education for responding agencies, stronger communication networks, improved coordination among partners, technical assistance, support for rehabilitation centers, and a more proactive approach to human-wildlife coexistence.

HB 4134 presents a significant opportunity to strengthen Oregon's wildlife rehabilitation network and advance wildlife coexistence statewide. We encourage the Commission to prioritize flexible financial support for licensed rehabilitation centers while investing in collaborative training,

education, and coordination efforts that improve wildlife outcomes and strengthen partnerships among agencies and rehabilitation centers.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to Oregon's wildlife.

Sincerely,

Sally Compton, Executive Director, Think Wild

Travis Koons, Wildlife Care Center Director, Bird Alliance of Oregon

Julie Collins, Executive Director, Cascades Raptor Center

Lynn Tompkins, Founder and Executive Director, Blue Mountain Wildlife

Kari Henningsgaard, Executive Director, Wildlife Center of the North Coast

Alyssa Nelson, Executive Director, Chintimini Wildlife Center



**THINK
WILD**



**WILDLIFE CENTER
OF THE
NORTH COAST**



BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

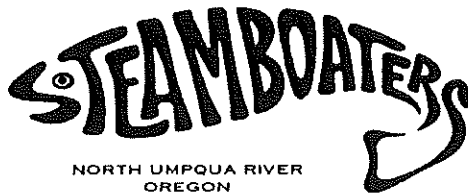
From: Steamboaters Board <steamboatersboard@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 4:22 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Cc: TATE Michelle L * ODFW
Subject: ODFW June Commission Meeting Exhibit B: 2027-29 Agency Requested Budget (ARB)
Attachments: Steamboaters ODFW ARB_ POP 117.docx.pdf

You don't often get email from steamboatersboard@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Chair What, Commissioners, Director Colbert,

Please accept the following letter on behalf of the Steamboaters regarding the June 26, 2026, ODFW Commission Meeting Exhibit B: 2027-29 Agency Requested Budget (ARB). Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Steamboaters Board



Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, Oregon, 97302

June 22, 2026

**Subject: Exhibit B: Agency Requested Budget, 2027-2029
Opposition to Policy Option Package (POP) 117**

Chair Wahl, Vice-Chair Hatfield-Hyde, Commissioners, and Director Colbert,

The Steamboaters thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Agency Requested Budget (ARB) for the 2027-2029 biennium, specifically the POP 117, which includes a plan to rebuild the Rock Creek Hatchery. As you know, this facility experienced severe damage from the 2020 Archie Fire. **The Steamboaters strongly oppose any reconstruction of this facility due to the extensive ecological damage and ODFW's Hatchery Resilience Assessment, where Rock Creek Hatchery received the lowest overall score among the 14 state-owned hatcheries evaluated.**

The Steamboaters have been actively engaged in the management and conservation of the North Umpqua River for nearly 60 years. Our mission is to preserve, protect, and restore naturally produced wild fish populations—especially steelhead—the habitats that sustain them, and the unique ecological and aesthetic values of the North Umpqua River for present and future generations.

A major concern is the extremely high-cost estimate, up to \$70 million, but with little public benefit. Prior to the fire, the NU spring Chinook hatchery program cost \$440 per fish harvested, the worst-performing program in the State's hatchery system. With the cost of reconstruction considered, this ratio would likely be much, much higher and fiscally unsound. Additionally, due to extreme environmental conditions, annual operating costs will be considerably higher and may even result in destruction once again. Several federal and state reports support this contention.

1. FEMA determined that the Rock Creek site is "... **at very high risk from debris flows of logs, debris, and sediment into the hatchery site**" (DHS/FEMA, 2020)
2. USGS found increased post-fire debris flows in the Western Cascades Georegion (Wall, et al, 2020)
3. DOGAMI found that the effects from the Archie Fire increased the **risk of debris flows 7-fold over pre-fire conditions** (DOGAMI, 2025)
4. The ODFW's own assessment (ODFW, 2025) found this facility to be the costliest, least resilient to climate change, and highest risk of environmental hazard. It is also in conflict with EO 25-26 (EO 2025), having, by far, the highest Greenhouse Gas Emissions from power generation/usage of the entire hatchery system.
5. Before the Archie Fire, the ODFW Assessment (ODFW, 2025) found that Rock Creek suffered from diminished summer stream flows and lethal water temperatures. This condition will almost certainly worsen due to the combination of climate change and further flow reductions from the establishment of extensive dense, early-stage plantations (Perry and Jones, 2017)

We are concerned that the alternatives presented in POP 117 do not include a "no-build" option, despite the documented benefits and extensive analysis of alternative approaches in the Hatchery Resilience Assessment (ODFW, 2025). We urge the Commission to either (1) reject POP 117 in its entirety or (2) reject the proposed Rock Creek Hatchery rebuild and instead pursue one of the Alternative 2 options identified in the Assessment.

The upcoming update to the Coastal Multi-Species Conservation and Management Plan will provide a more appropriate framework for evaluating decisions of this magnitude. Proceeding with the Rock Creek Hatchery rebuild now could foreclose future management options that should be considered through the CMP update process.

Thank you for your consideration in this important decision.

Sincerely,

Jake Crawford
Steamboaters Board of Directors
PO Box 396
Idlewild Park, Oregon 97447

Literature Cited:

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S.A. Wall, Roering, J.J., Rengers, F.K., (2020). Runoff-initiated post-fire debris flows in Western Cascades, Oregon: Landslides. U.S. Geological Survey, V.17, No. 7, pp.1649-1661

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BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Kirk Blaine <kblaine@wildsalmoncenter.org>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 5:42 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Cc: TATE Michelle L * ODFW
Subject: WSC Comments - Exhibit B: ODFW 27-29 ARB
Attachments: WSC - ODFW Commission Testimony Exhibit B_ 27-29 ARB.pdf

You don't often get email from kblaine@wildsalmoncenter.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

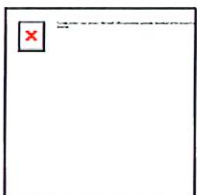
Chair Wahl, Commissioners, and Director Colbert,

Please accept the attached PDF comments for the Wild Salmon Center regarding Exhibit B: ODFW 27-29 ARB for the June 26, 2026, ODFW Commission meeting. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Kirk Blaine

--

Kirk Blaine
Sr. Manager Wild Fish - Oregon



Wild Salmon Center

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Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, Oregon, 97302

June 22, 2026

RE: ODFW 2027-29 Agency Requested Budget (ARB)

Chair Wahl, Vice-Chair Hatfield-Hyde, and Members of the Commission:

Wild Salmon Center (WSC) appreciates the opportunity to comment regarding the 2027-29 Agency Requested Budget (ARB). In general, WSC is encouraged to know that current levels of funding for Oregon Coast salmon strongholds will remain consistent with the 2025-2027 biennium, and that new funding sources will deepen ODFW's commitment to conservation and assist with the recovery of wild salmon populations on the Oregon Coast. However, we are concerned about the proposed actions to increase investments into hatchery programs that expand the hatchery footprint, which is contrary to recommendations from the in-depth, one-million-dollar Hatchery Resilience Assessment completed in the 2023-2025 biennium. WSC recommends that ODFW re-evaluate Policy Option Package (POP) 117, Investing in Sustainable Hatchery Capacity for the Umpqua Basin, and remove the proposed Rock Creek Hatchery rebuild. Doing so would better align the proposal with the Department's Strategic Plan, Executive Order 25-26 (EO 25-26), and the findings of the Hatchery Resilience Assessment, while providing a more fiscally responsible use of public funds.

WSC is a nonprofit organization based in Oregon that focuses on protecting and conserving salmon strongholds, where wild salmon populations are strong and diverse, and where habitats are highly functioning and intact. We use science to drive policy, lead watershed-scale planning processes, and support implementation of durable conservation protections.

The Department has indicated that the proposed 2027–2029 Agency Requested Budget¹ is intended to:

- Advance the resilience of species, lands, and waters consistent with the Governor's Executive Order 25-26,
- Anticipate climate impacts and implement landscape-scale, forward thinking solutions,
- Build on working lands partnerships,
- Serve all who live and recreate in Oregon,
- Leverage existing frameworks and plans for success, and
- Remain grounded in collaboration.

Wild Salmon Center offers the following recommendations to the Department for developing a more fiscally responsible budget consistent with its proposed intentions.

- 1. Maintain existing salmon and steelhead conservation and monitoring programs on the Oregon Coast while pursuing opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness.**

¹ 2027-2029 ODFW ARB Commission Agenda Summary, <https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-06/Exhibit%20B%20Attachment%201-%20Agenda%20Item%20Summary.pdf>

WSC encourages ODFW to continue maintaining current funding under the *Conservation and Recovery Program* for Inland Fisheries. This program is essential to advancing native fish conservation across Oregon, providing the scientific foundation and policy framework necessary to guide the management, conservation, and recovery of salmon and steelhead populations on the Oregon Coast. By conducting research, monitoring fish populations, assessing species status, and developing management plans, the program provides ODFW with the information necessary to make effective conservation and fisheries management decisions. These efforts support the long-term health of salmon and steelhead populations on the Oregon Coast while maintaining sustainable angling opportunities throughout the state.

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of ODFW's Inland Fisheries *Conservation and Recovery Program*, WSC encourages ODFW to partner with [Salmon Vision](https://salmonvision.org/)² to develop and implement cutting-edge Artificial Intelligence tools to monitor salmon populations and migration patterns in a cost-effective way that is scalable around our state. Implementing this technology would improve monitoring efficiency, support science-based management, and allow staff to focus on priority conservation needs. WSC stands ready to support ODFW in the implementation of this and other enhanced monitoring programs in the coming years.

Overall, maintaining current funding levels for the Department, along with the anticipated inflationary adjustment, will ensure ODFW can continue advancing its Strategic Plan, achieve the intentions of the proposed ARB, while meeting the state's conservation and management objectives. Additionally, it will better position the Department to achieve the newly proposed Executive Order No. 25-26.

2. Re-evaluate POP 117: Investing in Sustainable Hatchery Capacity for the Umpqua Basin to remove the proposed Rock Creek Hatchery rebuild and be consistent with ODFW's 2025 Hatchery Resilience Assessment, ODFW's intentions for the ARB, Executive Order 25-26, and a fiscally responsible use of public funds.

Included in the proposed ARB is POP 117, Investing in Sustainable Hatchery Capacity for the Umpqua Basin.³ This package includes one-time construction costs, directing \$16.9 million in insurance funding collected from the loss of Rock Creek Hatchery during the Archie Creek Fire, a planned FEMA grant proposal (not yet secured) for \$53.19 million, and a funding gap of \$1.1 million that the Department has listed as TBD.

Wild Salmon Center does not oppose the Umpqua Basin Hatchery Programs or the repair of hatchery facilities in Oregon. We believe that any investments in hatchery management must be grounded in science, aligned with the Hatchery Resilience Assessment,⁴ consistent with the Coastal Multi-species Conservation Management Plan, and represent a strategic investment for the future of Oregonians. We ask ODFW to re-evaluate POP 117 to better align with the Hatchery Resilience Assessment, the best available science, long-term operations and maintenance costs, EO 25-26, and the Department's stated intentions for the ARB.

² <https://salmonvision.org/>

³ ODFW proposed Policy Option Packages

https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-06/Exhibit%20B%20Attachment%203%20-%202027-29%20Policy%20Option%20Packages_1.pdf

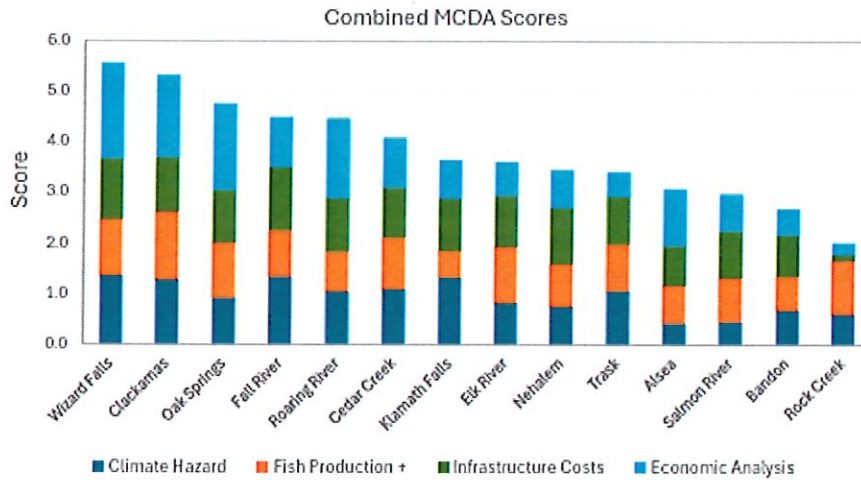
⁴ Budget Note Report, Third-party assessment of the operations, sustainability, and climate vulnerability of state-owned fish hatcheries

<https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/hatchery/docs/resilience/Final%20Budget%20Note%20Report.pdf>

a. **Rock Creek Hatchery rebuild is inconsistent with the findings and recommendations of the 2025 Hatchery Resilience Assessment and years of scientific and economic evaluation.**

In 2023, a budget note passed by the Legislature funded a one-million-dollar evaluation of the current state-owned hatchery system by a third party to assess the operations, sustainability, and climate vulnerability of state-owned fish hatcheries.

During the Hatchery Resilience Assessment, Rock Creek Hatchery received the lowest overall score among the 14 state-owned hatcheries evaluated in the multi-criteria decision analysis.



Third-Party Analysis of Oregon Hatcheries from Final Budget Note Report⁵

Additionally, during the development of the Hatchery Resilience Assessment, the third-party contractors and ODFW provided multiple alternatives for maintaining current hatchery production that would minimize financial strain while providing long-term solutions for the state hatchery infrastructure, under the policy and planning portion of the assessment. Not one of the proposed alternatives (outside of status quo) recommended rebuilding a hatchery at Rock Creek.⁶

Given that the Legislature specifically funded the assessment to guide future hatchery investments, ODFW should clearly articulate why a major capital investment at Rock Creek Hatchery is warranted despite the assessment's findings. Rationale included in the attachments for the Policy Option Package does not justify such major capital investments and multiple alternatives should be included for consideration.

b. **Long-term costs for operations and maintenance will continue to constrain ODFW.**

⁵ Pg. 16 Budget Note Report, Third-party assessment of the operations, sustainability, and climate vulnerability of state-owned fish hatcheries
<https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/hatchery/docs/resilience/Final%20Budget%20Note%20Report.pdf>

⁶ ODFW Final Budget Note Report, Attachment: Assessment of ODFW State Hatchery Infrastructure Alternatives, Lynker, Pg.33, Table 4-1, Description of the alternative operational scenarios for ODFW hatcheries evaluated within this study,
<https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/hatchery/docs/resilience/Final%20Budget%20Note%20Report.pdf>

Rock Creek Hatchery rebuild in any capacity will incur high operational costs. The current proposal for ongoing operational costs is estimated at \$1.9 million per biennium for Rock Creek Hatchery.

In addition to regular operational costs, the facilities will incur maintenance expenses. These costs are not clearly outlined in POP 117. For example, during the Hatchery Resilience Assessment, ODFW identified over \$180 million in deferred maintenance costs at the 14 state-owned facilities. This deficit was allocated over multiple decades, and ODFW does not have a plan for these costs moving forward.

WSC encourages ODFW to provide an alternatives analysis to the public and Commission on the proposed long term 30 year costs of Rock Creek Hatchery rebuild and investing in other potential options identified in the Hatchery Resilience Assessment.

c. Rock Creek Hatchery rebuild does not align with actions identified in EO 25-26 and the overall intentions of ODFW's proposed ARB.

Executive Order 25-26⁷, Section I.2.a., directs agencies to identify and prioritize actions that enhance the resilience of Oregon's lands and waters using the best available science. As noted above, the investment in Rock Creek Hatchery is contrary to ODFW's Hatchery Resilience Assessment. In addition, operating a hatchery in the Rock Creek watershed may increase demands on water resources and expose ODFW to additional climate-related risks that were identified in the Hatchery Resilience Assessment.

EO 25-26 emphasizes restoring the resilience of natural systems and watersheds. Given the vulnerabilities identified in the Hatchery Resilience Assessment, it is highly unlikely that Rock Creek Hatchery rebuild represents the most effective long-term investment. Alternative approaches identified in the Assessment would likely provide greater ecological and fiscal benefits while more closely aligning with the Department's stated objectives for the 2027–2029 ARB.

Rock Creek Hatchery rebuild contradicts ODFW's intentions of the proposed ARB specifically - *"Anticipating climate impacts and implementing landscape-scale, forward thinking solutions, serving all who live and recreate in Oregon, and leveraging existing frameworks and plans for success."*⁸ As noted in the assessment, a Rock Creek Hatchery rebuild would be the least practicable investment in regards to climate vulnerability. ODFW has repeatedly stated that management decisions should be guided by the best available science.⁹ The Hatchery Resilience Assessment is a science-based assessment that was commissioned by the Legislature specifically to inform future hatchery investments. If ODFW intends to pursue a course of action that differs substantially from the assessment's findings and recommendations, it should provide a detailed scientific and economic rationale for doing so to the public and Commission.

According to Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife - 2027-29 Proposed Policy Option Packages, POP 117 identifies that \$20 million of the total \$76 million proposal would be used to

⁷ Executive Order No. 25-26, <https://www.oregon.gov/gov/eo/eo-25-26.pdf>

⁸ 2027-2029 ODFW ARB Commission Agenda Summary, <https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-06/Exhibit%20B%20Attachment%201-%20Agenda%20Item%20Summary.pdf>

⁹ ODFW Budget Presentation April 7, 2026, slide 6

<https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/budget/docs/27-29/April%207%20Budget%20Open%20House%20Presentation.pdf>

rebuild Rock Creek Hatchery. Given ODFW's backlog of more than \$180 million in deferred maintenance across the state owned hatcheries, allocating substantial new funding to Rock Creek Hatchery may limit the Department's ability to address higher-priority infrastructure needs that benefit fisheries and anglers throughout Oregon. This is yet another example that using these funds to rebuild Rock Creek Hatchery is not the best use of funds serving all who live and recreate in Oregon.

Rebuilding Rock Creek Hatchery before a comprehensive evaluation of alternative production strategies is completed may commit the state and ODFW to decades of future operational and maintenance costs, reducing its flexibility to respond to emerging conservation challenges and climate-related risks elsewhere in Oregon.

WSC recommends that ODFW re-evaluate POP 117 to better align with ODFW's Hatchery Resilience Assessment, achieve Executive Order No. 25-26, and to provide a more fiscally responsible approach to allocating state funding, now and into the future. Additionally, due to the overwhelming operational costs at Rock Creek Hatchery, which are likely to offset the poor ecological conditions outlined in the assessment, we encourage the Department to pursue alternative options identified in the assessment to achieve its goals.

3. POP 101: Recovering Oregon's Wildlife - HB 4134 (Transient Lodging Tax)

Wild Salmon Center appreciates ODFW's investment to expand landscape-scale restoration for numerous State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) species. Although Salmon and Steelhead investments are not directly identified in the new funding made available, we recognize that salmon and steelhead will benefit. Additionally, the investment in capacity for both diversity biologists and habitat biologists will continue to help support necessary improvements in Oregon coast salmon strongholds.

Initially, WSC did have concerns with a proposed "Chinook Production for Orca (\$500,000)" identified during the May 12, 2026, budget hearing.¹⁰ This action was to increase prey for Southern Resident Orcas (SRO) and was identified in the Southern Resident Orca Endangered Species Management Plan (ESMP). We appreciate ODFW revisiting and removing this proposed action, thereby ensuring that newly allocated monies from the Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) are not used to enhance hatchery infrastructure or produce more hatchery fish.

Moving forward, WSC asks ODFW not to use monies from the TLT to fund any hatchery infrastructure projects or hatchery fish production.

We encourage ODFW to invest funds in the three other actions identified in the ESMP, including: implementing new education and outreach on SRO, addressing potential vessel disturbance of SRO, and partnering with researchers to collect data on SRO presence off the Oregon Coast.

If ODFW would like to allocate funding for prey, we encourage the Department to work with WSC to develop a Spring Chinook Strategic Action Plan for landscape-scale restoration across the Oregon coast and direct funding for implementation of that action plan. This effort and partnership has been highly successful in the recovery of Oregon Coast Coho.

Conclusion

¹⁰ ODFW Budget Presentation, May 12, 2026, Slide 23
https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/budget/docs/27-29/ODFW_budget_meeting_May_12_2026.pdf

Wild Salmon Center appreciates that ODFW has maintained current levels of investment in salmon and steelhead from the 2025-2027 budget and will continue to invest in efforts to expand capacity in both habitat and diversity species throughout the state. We encourage the Department to expand its efforts and budget to monitor Oregon Coast salmon and steelhead, including adopting Salmon Vision on key watersheds. These efforts align with ODFW's Strategic Plan, the proposed ARB, and EO 25-26.

However, we encourage ODFW to reconsider its proposal to expand the hatchery network through POP 117, which appears inconsistent with the Hatchery Resilience Assessment completed in 2025 and presented to the Legislature in 2026. This proposed action deviates from ODFW's intentions for the ARB, its strategic plan's goal number one: *Demonstrate effective stewardship of Oregon's fish, wildlife, and their habitats*, and pushes ODFW away from implementing Executive Order 25-26.

ODFW commissioned a legislative assessment to identify resilient and cost-effective hatchery investments. The proposed rebuild appears inconsistent with the findings and recommendations of that assessment. Before committing tens of millions of dollars and decades of future operating costs, the Department should provide a transparent, detailed alternatives analysis and explain why this investment represents the best available science and use of public funds.

Therefore, WSC recommends that the Commission remove or substantially revise POP 117 and evaluate alternative production and infrastructure strategies identified in the Hatchery Resilience Assessment before committing additional state resources to rebuilding Rock Creek Hatchery.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Blaine', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kirk Blaine
Sr. Program Manager Wild Fish - Oregon
Wild Salmon Center

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Sristi Kamal <kamal@westernlaw.org>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 6:51 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW; DENNEHY Michelle N * ODFW; CLEMENTS Shaun * ODFW
Subject: Oregon Wildlife Coalition comment letter on ARB
Attachments: OWC budget comment letter_ HB 4134 POPs.pdf

You don't often get email from kamal@westernlaw.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Chair Wahl, Vice Chair Hatfield-Hyde, and Deputy Director Clements

Attached is the Oregon Wildlife Coalition's comment letter on HB 4134-associated POPs in the Agency Requested Budget (ARB). I wasn't able to submit it using the online comment form because it seems to have a word limit and would not allow me to paste the whole letter.

Please do reach out if you have any questions on our comment letter.

Thank you

Sristi

P.S. Resending this email because of a typo in the Commission email address in the previous email - apologies!

--

Sristi Kamal, Ph.D.
Deputy Director | Western Environmental Law Center
kamal@westernlaw.org | 971-808-0775
[Web](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Bluesky](#) | [Instagram](#)



To
The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
Salem, Oregon,

June 22, 2026

Re: Comment letter on HB 4134-associated Policy Option Packages

Dear Chair Wahl, Vice Chair Hatfield-Hyde, and members of the Commission,

We are submitting this letter on behalf of the members of the Oregon Wildlife Coalition (OWC) regarding the proposed use of HB 4134 funds, specifically what we support and where we have concerns.

As you are aware, several members of the Oregon Wildlife Coalition co-led and actively engaged in the "1.25% for Wildlife" campaign for many years to secure dedicated funding for non-game and at-risk species and their habitats. We are very excited that the revenue generated from HB 4134 and the corresponding capacity improvements will finally enable the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to more effectively accomplish its mission to "protect and enhance Oregon's fish and wildlife and their habitats" by securing funding for this previous unfunded but critical mandate of ODFW.

The proposed use of the funds, as shared by ODFW during the stakeholder meetings, largely aligns with what we and other stakeholders had envisioned, and we look forward to publicly supporting and advocating for the full Policy Option Package (POP) that represents the 0.9% of the dedicated funding in HB 4134 all the way to the legislature. Below we provide background and reasoning for our support of the core POPs:

1. **Wildlife Connectivity POP** - Since 2019, the Oregon legislature has directed ODFW to develop a Wildlife Corridor Action Plan (HB 2834), which identified priority wildlife connectivity areas and required ODFW to undertake or plan projects to support wildlife connectivity within these connectivity areas (HB 2978 (2025)). During this same time period, the legislature appropriated funding to this end in the 2022 (HB 5202) and 2023 (HB 5030) legislative sessions, however, these one-time appropriations were not sufficient to maintain or improve connectivity at the scale assessed by the Wildlife Corridor Action Plan. With the passage of HB 4134, and [the associated .050% for](#)

[ODFW's wildlife connectivity program](#), as well as the increased staffing capacity available to assist in Plan implementation, ODFW will now be able to better resource Plan implementation. Moreover, by making 60% of the funding available to external partners through a competitive grant program (as stated in slide 15 [ODFW's May 12th presentation](#)), ODFW will only enhance our statewide ability to improve connectivity. **For these reasons, we strongly support the Wildlife Connectivity POP.**

2. **Wildlife Stewardship POP - We strongly support the Wildlife Stewardship Program** and its investments in coexistence biologists, public outreach and education, and wildlife rehabilitation center grants. Several of the OWC organizations were part of the original Wildlife Response Workgroup which worked with ODFW and other partners to pull the original ideas together for this program. Developed through a broad stakeholder process, the program was envisioned as a proactive approach to reducing conflict, supporting communities living alongside wildlife, and strengthening partnerships across Oregon. As implementation moves forward, we encourage continued investment in the training, communication, coordination, and technical assistance functions that were central to the original vision and remain essential to effective and humane wildlife responses.
3. **Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund (OCRF) POP** - OCRF, since its inception, has supported grassroots organizations and partners of ODFW in implementing the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). OCRF funded projects have been able to fill gaps in ODFW's funding and staff capacity while encouraging partnership and collaboration with the agency. With the passage of HB 4134, the uncertainty in funding for OCRF has been resolved and partners and grassroots organizations can rely on the availability of these grants more consistently, and therefore, plan better and make a bigger difference in supporting conservation efforts on the ground. For these reasons, **we strongly support the OCRF POP.**
4. **State Wildlife Action Plan Implementation (SWAP) POP** - bulk of the revenue from HB 4134 is directed towards this POP (0.9% of the total 1.25% from the state TLT). This POP significantly bolsters ODFW's capacity to research, monitor and implement conservation and restoration projects for the imperiled species and habitats in the SWAP. Overall, we support the POP but we wanted to highlight the investments we especially and strongly support, and the one investment we have strong concerns about.

In particular, and following ODFW's proposed structure of the funding breakdown of "Know, Plan, Do" **we are very supportive of the following investments:**

- **In the "Know" category**, we strongly support the investments in 31 (total) diversity biologists and native fish biologists (3.5 FTE) proposed in the POP. The positions will fill a long-standing gap in ODFW's staff capacity to work on non-game species, imperiled species, and their habitats – this investment will open doors to new research and monitoring capacity, along with implementation of conservation and restoration projects. Without this staff capacity build up, ODFW will not be able to

fulfill the vision behind HB 4134. It balances the agency's staff composition and thereby fulfills ODFW's mission mandate to serve *all* fish wildlife species in the state. Additionally, we are excited to see investments into species that historically had limited to no investment in filling our knowledge gap about their conservation needs in the past such as Oregon vesper sparrow, red tree vole, pygmy rabbit, torrent salamander, Wilson's Phalarope, Tufted Puffin, to name a few.

- **In the "Plan" category**, we support the investments in statewide specialists for mammals, birds, and herpeto-fauna (3 FTE), and the position for implementing the Beaver Action Plan. We also support the Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse reintroduction planning and analysis/planning for Kit Fox habitat restoration.
- **In the "Do" category**, and similar to the investment in the diversity biologists, we are excited to see the investments in 21 (total) habitat biologists. We anticipate landscape scale conservation research, monitoring and restoration that will benefit multiple SWAP species will now be possible with the investment in staff capacity. Additionally, we support the in communications and outreach capacity (1 FTE) to tell the story of how HB 4134 implementation is bringing change on the ground. Lastly, we support the on-ground actions such as habitat restoration demonstration projects in Portland Metro area, implementation of Pacific Fisher Reintroduction in SW Oregon, habitat restoration for Burrowing Owl in Umatilla, invasive species control in NW Oregon to benefit NW Pond Turtle, and habitat restoration demonstration project for beaver.

With regards to investments in the various bioregions, we are particularly excited to see investments in:

- Coastwide monitoring of kelp/rocky habitat, Marine Resource Coordinator for efforts on sea otter restoration and Southern Resident Orca recovery actions, social science research to support Sea Otter reintroduction and outreach and research on Sunflower Seastar culture **in the Nearshore Ecoregion**.
- Mazama newt culture and translocation, Chinook reintroduction and ecosystem restoration to recover rare bull-trout populations **in the Klamath region**.
- Targeted investments to build rangeland resiliency for species such as Sagebrush Sparrow, Desert Horned Lizard, Brewer's Sparrow, Washington Ground Squirrel, American Pika, Great Sage-grouse, and incentivize virtual fencing to restore habitat connectivity **in Eastern Ecoregions**.

This POP presents a historic investment that was previously impossible and opens the door to meaningful investment in the recovery of Oregon's most imperiled species and habitats. It also can be a critical piece in efforts to realize goals in Executive Order 25-26 which calls for protection of 10% more climate-resilient habitats in the next 10 years.

However, one small but critical piece in the proposal is a matter of significant concern and will overshadow what is otherwise a strong proposal that everyone can support and be excited about. Specifically, the proposed investment of \$500,000 (as included in the [May 12th presentation by ODFW](#)) for the increased production of hatchery Chinook to help Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW).

Listed below we provide our detailed concerns with this proposal. Additionally, we believe it's important that any consideration to increase hatchery-produced Chinook to support SRKW recovery should undergo thorough analysis to ensure it will achieve the intended purpose.

- ***The bad precedent it sets around use of HB 4134 funds:*** The first round of the budget process of HB 4134 funds sets the tone for what can be anticipated in terms of the use of these funds in the future as well. This hatchery allocation sets a concerning precedent for what HB 4134 CAN fund in the future and puts this funding stream on a slippery slope toward future HB 4134 funds being redirected to hatcheries.
- ***Undermines the purpose of HB 4134:*** The genesis of the “1.25% for Wildlife” campaign was to identify and secure funding for at-risk, non-game species and their habitats, as species that are hunted and fished have direct funding through fees and taxes levied on hunting and fishing activities. As such, funding from these activities is restricted, and the groups that contribute to that revenue stream want it specifically reinvested in their game resources. That led conservation groups to look for alternative funding for this specific purpose. By directing some of these funds for direct sport fishing activities, it undermines the purpose of the campaign. It also erodes trust in the agency among stakeholders like us, as well as others who joined the campaign with the understanding that the resources would not be used for hatchery funding.
- ***Fractures the “1.25% for Wildlife” coalition:*** The “1.25% for Wildlife” campaign was successful, in part, because of the large coalition (of 80+ groups in the conservation community) behind it. The campaign co-leads had to walk a fine line of not being too restrictive for the agency to be able to use the funds effectively, while protecting the original intent of the legislation and building trust among partners that it would not be diverted to fund ODFW’s “standard” practices. The allocation of funds to a hatchery in the very first budget iteration threatens to fracture the coalition that is otherwise willing to stand alongside ODFW to advocate for the whole POP during the next legislative session.
- ***Creates legislative hurdles:*** One of the biggest challenges we had to navigate at the legislature was keeping the purpose of HB 4134 separate and additive to any general funds that ODFW receives. Simply put, we worked hard to educate legislators and ensure that passage of HB 4134 does not mean ODFW gets less general funds in the future – HB 4134 fills a long-standing deficit that never received funds in the first place. This hatchery allocation, if included in ODFW’s budget proposal to the legislature, makes that distinction murky and risks the legislature redirecting general funds request items to the TLT in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments. We look forward to working alongside ODFW to get the POPs successfully through the legislature. We hope you will resolve our hatchery concern we have raised and clear a collaborative path forward for the 2027-2029 ODFW budget.

Sincerely,

Oregon Wild

Humane World for Animals

Western Environmental Law Center

Humane Voters Oregon

Defenders of Wildlife

Bird Alliance of Oregon

Cascadia Wildlands

Willamette Riverkeeper

Think Wild

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Colin Reynolds <creynolds@defenders.org>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 9:16 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Cc: Hannah Epstein
Subject: Exhibit B: Orca Coalition Letter to OR F&W Comm. re. POP 101
Attachments: Orca Coalition Letter to OR F&W Comm. re. POP 101.pdf

Good evening,

Please see attached for a letter on behalf of organizations representing Oregon's Orcas Coalition regarding POP 101 – Recovering Oregon's Wildlife.

Thank you,

- Colin



Colin Reynolds
Senior Advisor, Northwest Program

[DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE](#)
Portland, OR
TEL: 703-980-5728
[Facebook](#) | [X](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Blog](#)

To: Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
Date: June 22, 2026

Re: Comment letter on 2027-29 Proposed Policy Option Package 101 – Recovering Oregon’s Wildlife

Dear Chair Wahl, Vice Chair Hatfield-Hyde, and Members of the Commission,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing Oregon’s Orcas Coalition, a partnership dedicated to the conservation of endangered Southern Resident Orcas (SROs), we respectfully submit this letter supporting POP 101 – Recovering Oregon’s Wildlife.

SROs are an iconic species in the Pacific Northwest. Organized into three “pods,” they are very intelligent and highly social animals who share similar vocal dialects to those they are related,ⁱ use tools,ⁱⁱ and per recent research, use dolphins as “scouts” in a cooperative hunting strategy.ⁱⁱⁱ SROs spend a portion of the year in Oregon waters, and when they are present, they are a major tourism draw to the coast.^{iv} Unfortunately, SROs are critically endangered, with only 74 whales documented during the most recent Center for Whale Research survey.^v Due to the SRO’s imperiled status, the Oregon Fish & Wildlife Commission (“Commission”) listed the species as endangered in February 2024^{vi} and the Commission approved ODFW’s SRO Endangered Species Management Plan (“ESMP”).^{vii} SROs were also listed as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the 2026 State Wildlife Action Plan (“SWAP”).^{viii}

Knowing the importance of dedicated funding to implement ODFW’s SRO ESMP and the SWAP, in general, signatories to this letter strongly advocated for the passage of HB 4134 in the 2026 Oregon Legislative Session. Once passed, signatories of this letter provided recommendations to ODFW on HB 4134 implementation, to include establishing an “Orca Recovery Manager” to lead implementation of ESMP actions and coordinate recovery strategies and increasing capacity for the nearshore ecoregion.

The proposed use of funds, as shared by ODFW during stakeholder meetings^x and detailed in POP 101, largely aligns with what we envisioned. We are particularly excited about the investments to the Nearshore Ecoregion, as the continued recovery of the nearshore environment will benefit many species.

Separately, the ODFW Agenda Item Summary for “Exhibit B: 2027-29 Agency Requested Budget” noted “there were numerous concerns raised regarding use of Transient Lodging tax dollars to pay for hatchery salmon production for Southern Resident Orcas.”^x Signatories to this letter were amongst those raising concerns, as we believed the funds could be better used to provide broader and more significant ecological benefits to SROs, and we were pleased to see that expenditure not included in POP 101.

Sincerely,

Hannah Epstein
Marine Conservation Manager
Oregon Shores

Colin Reynolds
Senior Advisor, Northwest Program
Defenders of Wildlife

-
- ⁱ Howard K. Takata, John A. North, & Michael L. Brown, *Biological Assessment of Southern Resident Orcas (Orcinus orca ater) in Oregon and Evaluation of Criteria to Classify the Species as Endangered Under the Oregon Endangered Species Act*, OREGON DEP'T OF FISH & WILDLIFE 17 (March 2025), https://nrimp.dfw.state.or.us/DataClearinghouse/default.aspx?pn=ViewFile&att=ODFW%2fODFW_42902_2_Takata.2025.ODFW+Science+Bulletin+2025-02_Southern+Resident+Orca+Biological+Assessment.pdf.
- ⁱⁱ Evan Bush, *Orcas may be able to make and use tools, with a little kelp from their friends*, NBC NEWS (June 23, 2025) <https://www.nbcnews.com/science/science-news/orca-killer-whales-kelp-tools-rcna213895>.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Leyland Cecco, *Orcas team up with dolphins to hunt salmon, study finds*, GUARDIAN (Dec. 11, 2025), <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/dec/11/orca-killer-whale-dolphin-hunt-salmon-study-british-columbia-canada>.
- ^{iv} See e.g., Lizzy Acker, *Orcas breach more than 40 times in rare Oregon coast appearance*, OREGONIAN (June 7, 2026), <https://www.oregonlive.com/trending/2026/06/orcas-breach-more-than-40-times-in-rare-oregon-coast-appearance.html>.
- ^v *Southern Resident Orca (SRKW) Population*, CENTER FOR WHALE RESEARCH, <https://www.whaleresearch.com/orca-population>.
- ^{vi} *Commission lists Southern Resident orcas as endangered, adopts survival guidelines*, OREGON DEP'T OF FISH & WILDLIFE (Feb. 16, 2024), https://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2024/02_Feb/021624.asp.
- ^{vii} *Marine mammals - Southern Resident Orcas*, OREGON DEP'T OF FISH & WILDLIFE, https://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/mammals/southern_resident_orcas.asp.
- ^{viii} *Killer Whale (Southern Resident DPS)*, OREGON DEP'T OF FISH & WILDLIFE, <https://swap.oregon.gov/sgcn/southern-resident-killer-whale-dps/>.
- ^{ix} *ODFW 2027-29 Budget Development Open House*, OREGON DEP'T OF FISH & WILDLIFE (May 12, 2026), https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/budget/docs/27-29/ODFW_budget_meeting_May_12_2026.pdf.
- ^x *Exhibit B: 2027-29 Agency Requested Budget: Agenda Item Summary*. OREGON DEP'T OF FISH & WILDLIFE 2 (June 26, 2026), <https://myodfw.com/sites/default/files/2026-06/Exhibit%20B%20Attachment%201-%20Agenda%20Item%20Summary.pdf>.

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: James Fraser <james.fraser@tu.org>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 9:51 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Cc: TATE Michelle L * ODFW
Subject: TU comments for ARB Exhibit B (Friday Commission meeting)
Attachments: Trout Unlimited comments ODFW ARB 6.22.26.pdf

Dear Chair Wahl, Vice-Chair Hatfield Hyde, and Members of the Commission,

On behalf of Trout Unlimited, please accept the attached written comments for Exhibit B of Friday's meeting. Thank you.

Sincerely,

James Fraser / Oregon Policy Director

james.fraser@tu.org / (971) 278-8085



**Every River
Needs A Champion**



James Fraser

Oregon Policy Director, james.fraser@tu.org, (971) 278-8085

June 22, 2026

Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, OR 97302
ODFW.Commission@odfw.oregon.gov

Re: TU input on 2027-2029 Agency Request Budget (June 26, 2026 Meeting)

Dear Chair Wahl, Vice-Chair Hatfield-Hyde, and Members of the Commission,

Trout Unlimited participates in the agency budget-building process at ODFW, and we greatly appreciate the Department's staff for providing related forums to stakeholders.

TU supports the vast majority of this agency request budget ("ARB"). Based on our review of [the 2027-2029 proposed Policy Option Packages \("POPs"\)](#) and discussions about those POPs with Department staff, TU provides the following specific input on the draft budget:

1. TU supports POP 101 (Recovering Oregon's Wildlife) and related proposals for using new TLT funding, especially including the components related to Klamath fish reintroduction, Klamath bull trout conservation, and adding staff biologists statewide.

POP 101 specifies the expenditure of revenues that ODFW expects from the 1.25% for Wildlife legislation (HB 4134 (2026)). TU is thrilled to see the agency receive this new conservation funding, and we expect it to make a meaningful difference for Oregon's native fish and wildlife. We particularly support the following components:

- Klamath Basin fish screen maintenance (1 FTE, approx. \$900k)
- Klamath Basin bull trout ecosystem restoration (approx. \$500k)
- Klamath Spring Chinook reintroduction (approx. \$300k)
- 31 new Wildlife Diversity Biologists (approx. \$8.8M)
- 21 new Habitat Biologists (approx. \$6.1M)
- Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund (OCRF) (approx. \$3.4M, via POP 104)

2. TU supports POP 116 (Fish Passage Infrastructure Lottery Bonds) because it continues the state's momentum on improving access for aquatic species to high quality habitats and coldwater refugia.

Oregon has made tremendous progress in recent years on addressing fish passage barriers. In 2022, the Legislature appropriated \$8 million for the purpose (HB 5202

(2022), section 399). In 2023, the Legislature provided an additional \$8.75 million for fish passage projects (HB 5030 (2023), section 3). In this time of unpredictable federal funding and increasing attention on habitat connectivity, TU appreciates this proposed third tranche of fish passage funding.

3. TU has concerns about POP 117 (Investing in Sustainable Hatchery Capacity for the Umpqua Basin) because the Rock Creek site faces significant challenges and there are numerous, material unknowns about the proposed South Umpqua facility.

TU participated in the 2024 Hatchery Resilience process, including the small group meetings which met in-person throughout that fall to discuss a decision-making framework about hatchery investments. The Department’s report on the assessment set forth the “five factors” that the small group viewed as important to consider when making decisions about hatcheries: Cost, Environmental Conditions, Wild Fish, Hatchery Performance, and Local Community Value & Economics (see ODFW’s “Looking Ahead” report here at PDF p. 23). Our understanding was that these factors would tee-up relevant analyses and considerations when ODFW made decisions about hatchery funding (especially in scenarios where the agency needed to decide whether to fund work at Facility A versus Facility B, and explain its rationale in doing so).

In 2025, the Legislature directed ODFW to provide a report on post-fire hatchery options for the Umpqua. That report concluded that a full-rebuild of Rock Creek Hatchery would be “cost prohibitive . . . less likely to meet temperature requirements . . . overly reliant on costly and complex mechanical systems . . . and more vulnerable to future natural disasters.” We agree, and accordingly, appreciate that the ARB does not propose a full re-build of the facility—instead, recognizing it in POP 117 as “one of the more vulnerable facilities in ODFW’s hatchery system.”

But the narrative for POP 117 lacks important information for the public to understand—and for the Commission to make a fully-informed decision about—how and where ODFW will replace Rock Creek’s capacity.

For instance, the budget does not include an analysis or discussion of the “five factors” from the Hatchery Resilience process. By proposing to spend this funding at both Rock Creek and an unspecified location in the South Umpqua, ODFW is necessarily choosing *to not* spend it making other facilities more resilient, prepared for the future, or capable of producing improved hatchery fish. That information and the reasoning behind it should be provided at this stage. The estimated cost of \$76 million is approximately 1/3 the cost to address all deferred maintenance at state-owned hatchery facilities in Oregon; a written analysis of the “five factors” would shed light on why the proposed action is preferable to options which would improve other, existing facilities (or perhaps, a combination of facilities in the Umpqua and outside the basin).

Moreover, the proposal in POP 117 about the South Umpqua lacks nearly all material information about how and where more than \$40 million would be spent. The POP narrative does not state where the new South Umpqua facility would be located—let alone what amenities, public access, or fishing opportunities might exist or be created. It does not specify the water source for the new facility or the water quality of the proposed water source (as one might expect here, given that ODFW is in large part not fully re-building Rock Creek due to impairments of the source water body). The narrative does not specify whether there’s a water right for the proposed facility, nor the likelihood of securing permits for a new water quality discharge in whichever basin the new facility would be located. Additionally, POP 117 includes \$7 million for “out-of-basin Department infrastructure” but it does not say what would be acquired or fixed, let alone where those investments would be located.

TU recognizes that ODFW has \$16.9 million in insurance funds (in-hand) plus \$53.19 million in federal FEMA funds (available) to replace the lost capacity at Rock Creek. And to be clear: we are *not* advocating that ODFW choose not to replace that capacity somewhere. But ODFW has maintained hatchery fish programs in the Umpqua basin without the requested facilities since 2020, and we do not see convincing justification or analysis in the ARB or supporting materials that POP 117 is the best and most cost-efficient, climate-resilient, balanced option moving forward—especially given the notable absence of significant relevant information.

Thank you for considering these comments, and please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

James Fraser
Oregon Policy Director
Trout Unlimited
james.fraser@tu.org

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Amy Patrick <driftcreekconsulting@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 9:01 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: ARB Comments - OR Wild Sheep Foundation
Attachments: OR WSF 2026 Budget Comments - Final.pdf

You don't often get email from driftcreekconsulting@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)
Please find the attached testimony regarding the ARB on behalf of the Oregon Chapter of Wild Sheep Foundation.

Thank you,
Amy

Amy Patrick
Drift Creek Consulting
driftcreekconsulting@gmail.com
503-949-9785

OREGON



June 22, 2026

Chair Wahl, Vice-Chair Hatfield-Hyde, Commissioners, and Director Colbert,

The Oregon Chapter of Wildlife Sheep Foundation (OR WSF) was part of the broad coalition involved in the multi-year effort to pass the historic funding bill, HB 4134. The effort to secure long-term, sustainable funding for the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) was doubly important to OR WSF due to the inclusion of the Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep as a key SWAP species. As such, OR WSF has participated in the recent stakeholder engagement process for development of the Agency Recommended Budget (ARB) and the proposed allocation of the HB 4134 funds.

OR WSF is generally supportive of the ARB with a few qualifications:

- Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep did not receive any funding in the initial HB 4134 allocation. However, in lieu of such funding, OR WSF has requested ODFW staff prioritize updating the 2003 Bighorn Sheep & Rocky Mountain Goat Management Plan. In the twenty-three years since the plan was last updated, the data collection and research on North American herds has grown tremendously and should be put to strong use in managing Oregon's populations. The plan update is a simple and timely need for an important SWAP species.
- Within the allocation of the HB 4134 funding, OR WSF acknowledges the need for additional staffing to accomplish the on-the-ground work necessary for SWAP species and habitats. While the 80 FTE referenced in the staff presentation is a higher number than anticipated, OR WSF is encouraged to see the largest percentage of funding going directly to the species and habitat projects. In future biennial allocations of the HB 4134 funds, OR WSF urges the department, and the Commission, to continue to prioritize the majority of funds to on-the-ground species and habitat improvements.
- The need to establish a durable foundation for allocation of HB 4134 funds cannot be overstated. To that end, OR WSF requests the agency implement a robust reporting matrix to ensure transparency and accountability regarding the performance of the initial distribution blueprint of HB 4134 funds. This ensures the ability to adaptively manage and steward the funds over time to secure the best outcomes for wildlife and habitat.

OR WSF is appreciative of the level of engagement afforded stakeholders during the budget process, particularly with the initial funding allocations from HB 4134.

Thank you,
Amy Patrick
On behalf of the Oregon Chapter of Wild Sheep Foundation

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Anna Richter Taylor <anna@artpublicaffairs.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2026 11:13 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Cc: CLEMENTS Shaun * ODFW; STAHL Tom * ODFW; WALTZ Grant T * ODFW; Kelly Coates - GO \ Natural Resources Director; Colby Gonzales - GO \ Fisheries Manager
Subject: On behalf of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians: Sustainable Hatchery Capacity for the Umpqua Basin
Attachments: 06.22.26 Umpua Basin CCBUTI.pdf

Good morning,

Please see the attached letter on behalf of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians in support of the policy option package supporting sustainable hatchery capacity for the Umpqua Basin.

My contact is below if you need this in a different format.

Thank you.

Anna

Anna Richter Taylor (she/her)
ART Public Affairs
www.artpublicaffairs.com
anna@artpublicaffairs.com
503-881-0491



COW CREEK BAND OF UMPQUA TRIBE OF INDIANS
GOVERNMENT OFFICES

2371 NE STEPHENS STREET, SUITE 100
ROSEBURG, OR 97470-1399

Phone: 541-672-9405

Fax: 541-673-0432

To: The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission

From: Kelly Coates, Natural Resources Director
Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians

Re: Sustainable Hatchery Capacity for the Umpqua Basin

Date: June 22, 2026

On behalf of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, I encourage you to support the agency's policy concept for the 2027 legislative session, which is essential to sustaining our government-to-government partnership on building a sustainable hatchery system for the Umpqua Basin.

The history of this partnership predates the Archie Creek fire of 2020; however, since the fire and the destruction of Rock Creek Hatchery, our partnership with the state has become even more important to our region as we reimagine a sustainable hatchery system throughout the basin. A sustainable Umpqua hatchery system benefits the stability and resilience of the southwest Oregon hatchery network that balances appropriate levels of fish propagation with a continued commitment to native fish restoration. The Tribe remains committed to a wholistic fisheries management approach including collaboration with local partners and implementation of stream restoration projects.

This project is important to our Tribe because we must protect our culture and ensure our people have access to our way of life. As such, we are not only partners in research, monitoring, and staffing, but also in securing funding for construction and focused ongoing operations at Rock Creek Hatchery, and for more robust programs at the proposed South Fork facility on Tribal lands.

As noted by ODFW staff, all funding sources have not yet been fully identified, and other funding may become available to the Tribe and/or ODFW for this project. We need time to continue exploring those options, and we cannot let this part of the state budget process timeline dictate whether this government-to-government partnership can succeed. Please support this policy package so that we can continue this important work and set a new standard for how our two governments can work together for the common good and the benefit of tribal and non-tribal Oregonians alike.

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Gabriel Garcia <ggarciamd@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2026 3:20 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Cc: Megan Ponder; Rick George; Kate Crump; Cassius Scott; Bryan Lessley; Don Elder; Liz Gilliam; Lindsay Schuelke; Michael Morrison
Subject: Opposition to Rebuilding Rock Creek Hatchery

You don't often get email from ggarciamd@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To: Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Commission

From: Gabriel Garcia

RE: Opposition to Rebuilding Rock Creek Hatchery

Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

I am writing to urge the ODFW Commission to **reject proposals to rebuild and resume propagation operations at the Rock Creek Hatchery** on the North Umpqua River. While the 2020 Archie Creek Fire was devastating, rebuilding this facility is an outdated approach to fisheries management that contradicts modern conservation science. As a member of the **Rivers Board of Directors** in Portland, OR I have become aware of the importance of a watershed approach to promote healthy rivers.

I request that you deny the rebuild based on three critical factors:

- **Threats to Wild Salmonids:** Decades of peer-reviewed research show that hatchery fish pose severe genetic, ecological, and behavioral risks to wild populations. The North Umpqua is globally renowned for its wild summer steelhead and coho. Supplementing these waters compromises the genetic integrity and survival of these fragile, native runs.
- **Climate Change and Watershed Reality:** The North Umpqua faces rising water temperatures and shifting flow regimes. Hatcheries demand massive amounts of cold, clean water—a shrinking resource. Investing in artificial production ignores climate realities, whereas investing in habitat restoration builds long-term, natural resilience.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Spending millions of public and conservation dollars to reconstruct and maintain a high-risk hatchery is fiscally irresponsible. These funds would yield a far greater ecological and economic return if directed toward habitat restoration, clean water initiatives, and wild-fish tourism.

The pause in operations since 2020 gives Oregon a historic opportunity to let the river heal and allow wild populations to rebound without hatchery pressure. I urge the Commission to choose a resilient, science-based future for the North Umpqua by **voting against the Rock Creek Hatchery rebuild.**

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,

Gabriel Garcia

10 Buckeye, Portola Valley, CA 94028

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Anne and Kevin <akmarch@pm.me>
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2026 10:09 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Rock Creek Hatchery

You don't often get email from akmarch@pm.me. [Learn why this is important](#)

It has come to my attention that there are possible plans for funding for a defunct Rock Creek hatchery on the North Umpqua river (EXHIBIT B 2027-29 AGENCY REQUESTED BUDGET).

Please do not spend millions of dollars on this terrible idea. Data now is clear that the only way forward for native stocks is with habitat protection and improvements, including changing laws in regards to beavers (thank you for the changes already made, though the next step is actual protections).

What a terrible idea. As native salmon and steelhead runs continue to decline, this is not the answer. Money should be put to where it is actually helpful to native runs.

Kevin March
akmarch@pm.me
La Grande, OR
541 962 5726

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) secure email.

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Lisa Hansen <kwaterbuff@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2026 8:25 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: 2027-29 Budget Request - Nix Rock Creek Hatchery Option

You don't often get email from kwaterbuff@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Chair Wahl and Commission Members,

I am requesting that you remove the funding request for re-building the Rock Creek Hatchery on the tributary of the North Umpqua River. As many individuals and organizations have expressed, re-building what was a disastrous, even harmful hatchery in the fire-prone region is a poor use of scarce public funds. The North Umpqua's wild winter run has demonstrated over the years that a purely wild run of steelhead can thrive in the watershed. Please give the summer run the opportunity to rebuild its wild genetics and the resilience that comes with it.

ODFW has so many other priorities and should not waste resources on re-building a hatchery that carries so much negative baggage.

Thank you for reading my note,
Lisa Hansen
Portland, OR

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: DJ Heffernan <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2026 3:46 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

Please do not rebuild the Rock Creek hatchery and use it to supplement the summer and winter steelhead fish runs in the North Umpqua River. The wild winter run is healthy as is and does not need supplementation. The summer run is low but years of supplementation have not helped and in fact may be doing more harm than good, especially if hatchery genetics are being introduced to the gene pool. Instead, use the tools that have been successfully applied to recover Coastal Coho runs. Instead, invest funds to build programs to improve spawning and rearing habitat, improve up and downstream passage, remove the Winchester Dam, and develop land and forest management agreements with the US Forest Service, local land owners, and tribes that in time will rebuild the wild summer run.

It will take time. The recreation anglers who are only interested in taking fish will object, but their short term harvest aims are at odds with the long term health of the resource. Regulations must be modified to match the health of the run. Please work to adopt a new approach for our wild fish runs in the North Umpqua, the Rogue, and other river systems. The "salmon without rivers" strategy does not work. Let's change course and give nature a chance.

Sincerely,

DJ Heffernan

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Jim Yarbrough <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2026 3:46 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

The Rock Creek Hatchery is no longer needed. Please don't rebuild it.

Oregon has already proven there is a better way than hatcheries. The coastal Coho comeback showed that investing in habitat and wild fish, not hatcheries, produces lasting returns for fish, communities, and local economies.

Sincerely,

Jim Yarbrough

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: David Griffiths <civinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2026 3:46 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

I urge ODFW to take a step back and consider whether rebuilding the Rock Creek Hatchery makes sense. Historically this hatchery has had the worst results of any hatchery program run by ODFW. Expending millions of dollars to rebuild this hatchery makes no sense when the coastal Coho comeback proved that habitat restoration and wild fish-focused management produce lasting returns not hatchery programs. The Umpqua Basin deserves that same investment, not a rebuild of the lowest-performing hatchery in Oregon's system.

The funding isn't there, and the long-term costs will likely fall on the state. ODFW has not provided a total cost estimate, has not identified a funding source, has not evaluated a no-build alternative, and has not secured a dedicated source of funding for the long-term operating and maintenance costs. Rebuilding this hatchery ignores the \$1 million analysis Oregonians already paid for. We can't afford to fix our highways, what should we spend good money on failed hatchery programs.

ODFW has not provided a total cost estimate for the project, has not evaluated a no-build alternative, and is proposing this commitment before the Coastal Multi-Species Conservation and Management Plan (CMP) review, which is supposed to guide wild fish conservation and hatchery investments in this basin, is complete.

Sincerely,

Dave Griffiths

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Lisa Brice <lbrices@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2026 9:48 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: No for Rock Creek fish hatchery funding

You don't often get email from lbrices@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

The Coastal Coho Comeback is a better idea.

Oregon has already proven there is a better way. [The coastal Coho comeback](#) in the 1990s showed that investing in habitat and wild fish produces lasting returns for fish, communities, and local economies. Pacific Rivers is proud to be a part of the North Umpqua Coalition, a group of organizations, community members, and watershed experts invested in the health of the beloved North Umpqua River, its renowned wild fisheries, and its surrounding habitat.

Thank you

Lisa Brice

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: William Smith <civinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2026 3:46 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

I am writing to you to express my opposition to the proposed Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild. I think that this is the wrong decision and the money should be put to use restoring habitat and a wild fish based fishery. This hatchery is a low performance hatchery and will be a liability to the state not an asset.

Sincerely,

William T Smith

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Jennifer Wilder <civinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2026 3:46 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

Please remove POP 117 from the ARB. Rock Creek Hatchery was the worst rated location in ODFW's hatchery resiliency process. The agency didn't even consider a partial rebuild in the scenerios they analyzed during that process because of how terrible the location is for a hatchery facility. It cost \$440 to produce each spring Chinook that was harvested. This is not a good ROI!

We need to invest in what works while we still have time, and that's the things that can help wild fish not just survive, but thrive in Oregon's waters: habitat, sustainable fisheries, and fewer hatcheries.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wilder

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Mark Metzdorff MD <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2026 3:46 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission

I write to vigorously oppose the proposal to rebuild the Rock Creek Hatchery facility. The millions of budgetary dollars this represents should not be invested in a failed approach to fish recovery, but rather directed to proven methods to support the wild native fish that we all wish to see in the North Umpqua River. These include habitat restoration, dam removal and improved monitoring programs to support a sustainable fishery.

Reject the failed solutions of the past--do not vote to rebuild the poor-performing, expensive non-solution to the challenge of the North Umpqua's wild fish!

Sincerely,

Mark Metzdorff, MD

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Bob Burch <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2026 3:46 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of do Not waste precious public money rebuilding rock Creek hatchery

rock creek was the lowest production hatchery in Oregon before the fire

Better to keep fish wild

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Robert Sheley <civicinput@newmode.io>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2026 3:46 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Subject: Tell the ODFW Commission: Reject the Rock Creek Hatchery Rebuild

Dear Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission,

Please do not endorse rebuilding the Rock Creek Fish hatchery. It would be a waste of precious taxpayer dollars to invest in what has already been shown to be a poorly functioning, inefficient facility. Oregonians and native Oregon fish

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: Kelly Peterson <kpeterson@humaneworld.org>
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 5:05 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Cc: Travis Koons; K Henningsgaard | Wildlife Center of the North Coast; Heather Gibons; Kelly Peterson
Subject: Wildlife Coexistence Program Implementation Recommendations
Attachments: Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission Budget Letter -- Wildlife Conflict Workgroup Members.pdf

You don't often get email from kpeterson@humaneworld.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Chair Wahl, Director Colbert, and Commissioners,

Attached please find a letter from members of the 2021-2022 Wildlife Response Work Group regarding implementation of the Wildlife Coexistence Program.

As the Commission begins discussions around implementation of HB 4134, we thought it would be helpful to revisit the original vision and recommendations that helped give rise to the Wildlife Coexistence Funding Package and to share our continued support for this important work.

Thank you for your partnership and leadership. We are grateful for the opportunity to continue working together to support proactive coexistence and wildlife stewardship across Oregon.

Sincerely,

Kelly

On behalf of the Wildlife Response Work Group signatories

Kelly Peterson
Oregon State Director
kpeterson@humaneworld.org
c (503) 869-0422



**Humane
World for
Animals™**

We are Humane World for Animals,
formerly called Humane Society of the United States



June 17, 2026

Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, OR 97302

Re: Implementing the Original Vision of Oregon's Wildlife Coexistence Program

Dear Chair Wahl, Director Colbert, and Commissioners

On behalf of the following members of the Wildlife Response Workgroup, we would like to express our appreciation for the Commission's leadership in advancing the successful passage of HB 4134. This legislation represents an important milestone and the culmination of years of meaningful collaboration by many partners committed to helping Oregonians and wildlife coexist peacefully.

As implementation moves forward, we respectfully encourage the Commission and Department to remain grounded in the original vision that gave rise to the Wildlife Coexistence Program.

Many of the program's foundational concepts emerged through the Wildlife Response Work Group convened by Commissioners Mark Labhart and Kathayoon Khalil in 2021-2022. The workgroup brought together representatives from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon State Police, wildlife rehabilitation centers, conservation, and humane organizations, all grounded in a shared reality: human-wildlife interactions are increasing across Oregon, and greater investment in community coordination and proactive solutions are needed.

At the time, participants identified several priorities that remain as relevant today as they were then:

- Expanded training and education to support consistent and effective responses to wildlife encounters across OSP, local law enforcement, animal services, ODOT, parks departments, veterinarians, and other partners;
- Stronger communication and coordination systems, including clearer pathways for both the public and responding agencies, answering the fundamental question, "Who do you call?";
- Increased support for and coordination with Oregon's wildlife rehabilitation network;
- Proactive, community-based outreach and education to prevent conflicts before they occur;
- Technical assistance and resources that empower local communities to successfully coexist with wildlife;
- Strong partnerships and coordination among agencies, wildlife rehabilitators, and stakeholders; and
- Sustained investment in humane, effective, and science-based approaches to managing human-wildlife conflicts.

Recent events around the state, including the black bear incident in Canby and the injured badger response in Central Oregon, underscore the importance of these investments and highlight the

continued relevance of the original recommendations. These situations point to the ongoing need for strong partnerships, improved communication and coordination, greater awareness of rehabilitation resources, and tiered training that equips responders with the tools and information needed to support effective and humane wildlife responses.

Specifically, we see tremendous opportunity for the Wildlife Coexistence Program to support:

- Wildlife response and coexistence training for OSP, local law enforcement, ODOT, parks departments, and other first responders;
- Structured collaboration, communication and training between ODFW field staff and wildlife rehabilitation centers;
- Development of clear response protocols and decision-support frameworks to guide consistent, effective action;
- Expanded public outreach and community-based coexistence initiatives;
- Technical assistance and grant programs that strengthen Oregon's network of wildlife rehabilitation centers and local partners; and
- Continuous learning through improved coordination, consistency, and after-action review.

These recommendations are not new. Rather, they reflect the same principles that have guided this effort from the beginning: moving from reactive responses toward proactive coexistence, strengthening public trust, supporting communities, and ensuring that Oregon remains a leader in humane and effective wildlife stewardship.

We are grateful for the Department's partnership and the Commission's longstanding commitment to this work. We look forward to continued collaboration to ensure the Wildlife Coexistence Program fulfills its full potential and delivers impactful, long-lasting benefits for Oregonians and wildlife.

Sincerely,

Alyssa Nelson, Executive Director, Chintimini Wildlife Center
Kari Henningsgaard, Executive Director, Wildlife Center of the North Coast
Travis Koons, Wildlife Care Center Director, Bird Alliance of Oregon
Kelly Peterson, Oregon State Director, Humane World for Animals