



# Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund

National Wildlife Federation  
June 10, 2017



# Conservation Funding in America



Carl Shoemaker, Chief of Oregon Fish & Game Commission, helped develop national model for funding fish and wildlife management

- User Pay Model
  - Started in 1930's
  - Expanded in 1950's to include fishing
  - Licenses and tag sales
  - Federal excise tax on purchases of firearms, ammunition, and fishing tackle
- Primary funding source for conservation and management of fish and wildlife
- Half of Oregon Fish & Wildlife revenue is from license fees and federal excise taxes

# Changing Landscape - New Challenges



# Secretary of State Audit



## AUDIT: CASH FLOW PROBLEMS THREATEN FINANCIAL HEALTH OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCY

By [Molly Woon](#) April 09, 2015 Audits

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) faces an ongoing cash flow problem that puts the agency's financial health at risk, according to a report by the Secretary of State.

# Ore. Considers Fee Hikes As Hunting, Fishing Suffer Declines

by AP AP | April 29, 2014 8:15 a.m. | Updated: May 2, 2014

Fewer Oregonians are hunting and fish money to sustain wildlife management gaps, the state's wildlife agency wants t enthusiasts who remain in a proposal t

The Oregon Department of Fish and W pays for its programs, and it plans to r revenue and more frequent increases it

## Fishing license hikes 'make outlaws of us'

ODFW fees to rise beginning in January 2016

Carla Castano

Published: August 4, 2015, 6:00 AM

## ODFW budget creates 'sticker shock'

State fish and wildlife managers are proposing to phase in an overall 26 percent increase to hunting and angling licenses and tags over five years

# Fee increases passed for hunting, fishing, boating in Oregon

By Bill Monroe | For The Oregonian/OregonLive on July 10, 2015 at 5:45 PM, updated July 10, 2015 at 5:46 PM



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## Costs of Oregon hunting, fishing licenses keep climbing

License sales drop but ODFW says price not main factor

By Dylan J. Darling • The Bulletin

Published Oct 25, 2015 at 12:03AM

Hunting and fishing license costs in Oregon are steadily going up, starting next year and continuing every other year until 2020.

An annual hunting license for an Oregon resident, which costs \$29.50 this year, will increase to \$32 next year, \$33.50 in 2018 and \$34.50 in 2020. An annual state resident fishing license, which costs \$33 this year, will cost \$38 next year, \$41 in 2018 and \$44 in 2020.

Increases in the license costs are not new, but the frequency of the price bumps and the smaller size of the increases are, according to Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Service data. Since 2004 the cost of annual hunting and fishing licenses for residents has increased every six years, said Aaron Jenkins, economist with the agency in Salem. Gov. Kate Brown this summer signed a bill setting the gradual price increases, he said.

"We would like the fees to edge up slowly rather than have a big jump," Jenkins said. "People don't like big jumps in prices."

# Alternative Funding Task Force

- HB 2402 - Alternative Funding Task Force
- Governor appointed
- 17 voting members representing:
  - Hunters and anglers
  - Conservation groups
  - Outdoor recreation businesses
  - Tourism industry
  - Outdoor education
  - Diverse communities
- 6 Ex Officio members
  - 2 Senators
  - 2 Representatives
  - ODFW Commission Chair
  - ODFW Director



|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Scott Welch</b>     | <b>Columbia Sports</b>                        |
| <b>Rob Morrison</b>    | <b>Leupold &amp; Stevens</b>                  |
| <b>Mark Labhart</b>    | <b>Tillamook County Commission</b>            |
| <b>Robb Ball</b>       | <b>The Nature Conservancy</b>                 |
| <b>Nancy Bales</b>     | <b>Gray Family Foundation</b>                 |
| <b>Paul Donheffner</b> | <b>Oregon Hunters Association</b>             |
| <b>Queta Gonzalez</b>  | <b>Center for Diversity &amp; Environment</b> |
| <b>Mike Herbel</b>     | <b>Neskowin Trading Company / Angler</b>      |
| <b>Jim Martin</b>      | <b>Pure Fishing (retired)</b>                 |
| <b>James Nash</b>      | <b>Ranger/Guide</b>                           |
| <b>Brad Pettinger</b>  | <b>Oregon Trawl Commission</b>                |
| <b>Claire Puchy</b>    | <b>Columbia Gorge Commission (retired)</b>    |
| <b>Meryl Redish</b>    | <b>Portland Audubon (retired)</b>             |
| <b>Kenji Sugahara</b>  | <b>Oregon Tourism Commission</b>              |
| <b>Bruce Taylor</b>    | <b>Oregon Habitat Joint Ventures</b>          |
| <b>Tricia Tillman</b>  | <b>Multnomah County Health</b>                |
| <b>Kari Westlund</b>   | <b>Travel Lane County</b>                     |

# Public Opinion Survey

- High value placed on conservation of fish and wildlife and opportunities for outdoor recreation.
- Availability of fish and wildlife-related recreation opportunities – 47% excellent, 34% good.
- Satisfaction with ODFW's management of fish, wildlife and habitat – 65% satisfied, 12% dissatisfied.
- ODFW credibility – 88% credible or very credible
- Significant disconnect between public values and how ODFW is funded.
- How ODFW should be funded:
  - 33% said general state taxes, 19% licenses
  - Current – 8% of budget is General Fund



**Responsive Management™**





# Three Funding Objectives



**Expand Conservation Efforts**



**Improve Fishing and Hunting**

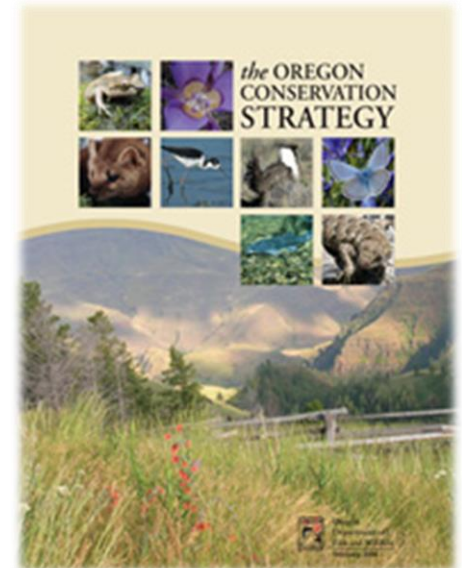


**Connect Oregonians with the Outdoors**

# Expand Conservation Efforts

- Implement Oregon Conservation Strategy/Nearshore Strategy
- Research, monitoring and inventories of species & habitat
- Fill data gaps and invest in data management, analysis and distribution
- Restore ecosystems to resiliency
- Provide field based technical assistance to landowners
- Expand enforcement
- Conservation Grants Program - \$12 million
- Leverage other funding and grants

**Investment - \$46.7 million / biennium**  
**54% of Funding**



# Improve Fishing and Hunting

- Cancel scheduled license fee increases
- Develop additional fishing locations with focus on urban, diverse and underserved communities
- Improve public access for fishing, hunting & viewing
- Research, monitoring and management of game species, freshwater and marine fisheries
- Improve and restore habitat through grants, partnerships and collaboration
- Develop mobile friendly maps and tools
- Increase enforcement

**Investment - \$22.3 million / biennium**  
**26% of Funding**



# Connect Oregonians with the Outdoors

- Expand conservation education with focus on urban areas
- Develop wildlife viewing opportunities and facilities
- New communication strategies to reach new, broader audiences (youth, millennials, diversity)
- More volunteers and “Citizen Scientists”
- Marketing and outreach to increase participation in wildlife recreation
- Increase diversity in participants and staff
- Partnerships - schools, NGOs, Outdoor School

**Investment - \$8.3 million / biennium**  
**9% of Funding**

**Total Funding Need = \$86.9 M/biennium**



# More Than 100 Options Considered

- Marijuana Tax
- Recreational Equipment Tax
- Beverage Container Surcharge
- Unredeemed Bottle Deposits
- Wildlife License Plate
- General Fund/Lottery Fund Allotments
- Income Tax Return Surcharge
- Agricultural Chemical Fee
- Wild Bird Seed Tax
- Recreational Vehicle Tag
- Real Estate Transfer Tax
- Rental Car Fee
- Lodging Fee
- Donations



# Evaluation: Is the Funding:

- ✓ **Sufficient** - Is it sufficient to address current and future needs?
- ✓ **Sustainable** - Does it generate continuous, dedicated funding?
- ✓ **Stable and flexible** – Will it fluctuate year to year? Can it adapt to changing circumstances?
- ✓ **Diverse and equitable** - Does it spread the cost of fish and wildlife management and conservation over a broader base?
- ✓ **Enhance diversity or engagement** - Does it affect the engagement of diverse and/or underrepresented individuals?
- ✓ **Cost effective** - Will it be easy to collect, administer and track?
- ✓ **Defensible** - Is there a connection between the funding and the need?
- ✓ **Politically feasible** - What will it take to implement this proposal?
- ✓ **Politically insulated** - Can it be diverted for other purposes?

# Alternative Funding Recommendations

## OREGON INCOME TAX RETURN SURCHARGE

- Applied to individual (non-corporate) tax returns.
- Exemption for low income filers.
- Rate - .62%
  - Family of 4; \$50,000 = \$17.64
  - Family of 4; \$75,000 = \$29.47
  - Family of 4; \$100,000 = \$42.08

## WHOLESALE BEVERAGE SURCHARGE

- Applied to beverages subject to the Bottle Bill; not a container deposit.
- Rate - 2.19%
  - 6 pack of soda = 7 cents
  - 6 pack of domestic beer = 11 cents
  - 6 pack of microbrew beer = 19 cents

# Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund

- Dedicated to conservation, management, research, habitat improvements, administration, enforcement and other activities that protect, maintain or enhance the native fish and wildlife of the state.
- Provide resources to expand conservation, improve hunting and fishing, and increase participation in outdoor recreation.





# 2017 Legislative Session



**VERIFY: If the economy is booming, why is there a \$1.6B state budget deficit?**

**Oregon's Budget Disaster: Coming Soon To Your Own State Capitol**

**Oregon lawmakers wrangle with closing the budget gap**

# 2017 Legislative Session

## HOUSE BILL 3270

- Creates Conservation and Recreation Fund
- Refers beverage tax to 2018 ballot

## HOUSE BILL 2213

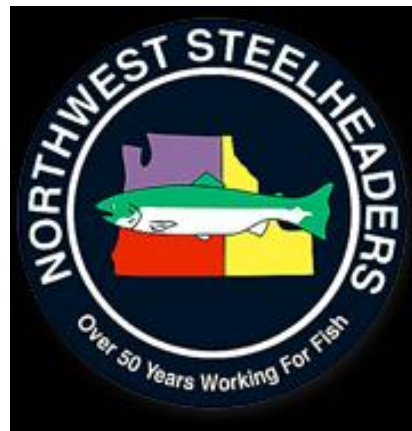
- Creates Conservation and Recreation Fund
- Establishes advisory committee
- Appropriates \$11M General Fund

*“It is an important start on important work...*

*It will help ensure that the natural resources of Oregon remain intact into the future, and that Oregonians will continue to have access to the healthy fish and wildlife habitats that we cherish.”*

# Next Steps

- Multi-year effort to increase awareness of importance of conservation and funding needs
- Community listening sessions
- Research/polling/message development
- Coalition building
- Prepare for future legislative sessions and elections



# Lessons Learned

- The coalition is critical. Partners will be more credible than the agency.
- Expand the coalition. The existing coalition will not be enough to overcome organized opposition.
- There is never a “right” time. There will always be budget issues, policy disputes, or other challenges.
- Be flexible.
- Be patient. It will take time.

*“We will treat like this a sprint until we are compelled to treat it like a marathon.”*

# Benefits for:

- ✓ **Outdoor recreationists** - *Healthy fish and wildlife populations. More recreation opportunities.*
- ✓ **Hunter/Anglers** - *All Oregonians share in cost of managing wildlife. Reduced fees and more opportunity.*
- ✓ **Conservation groups** - *Focus on conservation and grants for on the ground projects.*
- ✓ **Business/Industry** - *Proactive conservation avoids Endangered Species listings. More recreation and tourism.*
- ✓ **Private landowners** - *Technical assistance. Reduced potential for regulations needed to protect at risk species.*
- ✓ **Parents** – *Programs to get youth offline and outdoors.*
- ✓ **Taxpayers** – *Cost effective. Avoid cost and disruption from ESA listings.*

# Questions?

