

## **ODFW Commission Nominations**

Les Helgeson  
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Chair Burdick, Members of the Committee,

I am concerned about the slate of candidates nominated for the ODFW Commission. If all are confirmed, the Commission would be disproportionately represented by industry interests even more so than it is now.

I have lived amidst fish and wildlife on the Upper Nestucca River for almost 35 years now and watched our resources decline dramatically. Up until recently, we would enjoy watching wild steelhead and Chinook salmon spawn along our property in modest numbers, increasing substantially after successful conservation efforts under then Governor Barbara Roberts and her Natural Resources Advisor, Anne Squier.

Since that time, the Commission and the Department have become dominated by industry interests who have consistently thwarted conservation efforts in favor of "opportunity". It has now been 3 years that we have documented ZERO spawners not only on our property but nearby stream reaches, as well. It has of course become fashionable to blame "ocean conditions", predators, etc., etc. - much like what was said in the 1980's and 90's when I first became involved with conservation efforts.

But we proved conclusively that conservation works and can lead to increased opportunity thanks to the collaborative efforts of Ms. Squier and concerned Commissioners such as Paul McCracken, John Esler and many others. But much has been undone by the Commission, especially the past 15 years or so.

It is sad that our conservation legacy has been so compromised over recent years. The serious depletion of too many resources continues in the name of industry and economic opportunity. We see problems with wildlife management, as well but the dollar takes precedence throughout ODFW's management game. We can and must do better!

Sincerely,

Les Helgeson