



# **American Fisheries Society Oregon Chapter**

**OR Chapter AFS: PO Box 8062 Portland, OR 97207-8062    [www.orafs.org](http://www.orafs.org)**

Date: April 18, 2023

## **RE: OREGON CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY SUPPORT OF THE BIPARTISAN DROUGHT RELIEF AND WATER SECURITY PACKAGE**

Chair Rep. Helm and Members of the House Committee of Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

The Oregon Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (ORAFS) comprises over 500 fisheries and aquatics science professionals from federal, state, and tribal agencies, colleges and universities, diverse private employers, college students, and retirees. ORAFS was established in 1964 as a chapter of the American Fisheries Society. Our mission is to improve the conservation and sustainability of Oregon fishery resources and their aquatic ecosystems for long-term public benefit by advancing science, education and public discourse concerning fisheries and aquatic science and by promoting the development of fisheries professionals.

ORAFS members are in support of the Bipartisan Drought Relief and Water Security Package (BiDRAWS) and its directives to support the conservation of water, promote better understanding of water budgets and uses, and improve water infrastructure to benefit communities, fish, wildlife, and water users. Water is one of the most important natural resources for Oregonians who rely on consistent water supplies for drinking water, recreation, fish and wildlife resources, and agricultural production. Current conditions across the state show the dire need for proper water planning and conservation. This package and important components like HB 3124 provide important direction and support for water conservation and infrastructure upgrades that are critical to ensuring adequate water resources persist long into the future for Oregon communities, water users, and ecosystems.

When evaluating the package, we want to highlight several initiatives that will provide important support for the conservation of water to help Oregon's fish and wildlife populations.

- 1-2    Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) Update and Implementation**
- 1-8    Targeted Investment: Initiating a Collaborative Approach to Water Management in the Chewaucan River/Lake Abert Watershed**
- 1-16    Core Agency Responsibilities: Water Rights and Protest Backlog Reduction**
- 2-6    Statewide Streamflow and Stream Temperature Monitoring**
  - Instream Flow Studies**
  - Coldwater Refugia Project**
- 2-7    Statewide Stream and Groundwater Monitoring**
- 5-1    Fish Passage Barrier Removal**
  - Fish Passage Program Capacity**
- 5-4    Process-Based Restoration, Natural Storage, and Watershed Benefits**
- 5-6    Klamath Targeted Restoration Projects**
  - Lake Ewauna Clean-up**
  - Fish Screens and Restoration in Newly Available Habitat**
  - Klamath Salmon Restoration Monitoring**
- 6-1    Irrigation Modernization Match for Federal Funds**
  - Irrigation Modernization Pre-Development Funding**

We support the broad initiatives of the BiDRAWS package and how it recognizes the importance of water to all Oregonians. We encourage passage of the bills included in the package, especially HB 3124 and those associated with the aforementioned initiatives.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Troy Brandt", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Troy Brandt – ORAFS, Legislative Committee Chair, 503-307-8367, [tbrandt@riverdesigngroup.net](mailto:tbrandt@riverdesigngroup.net)