



March 22, 2023

Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Natural Resources
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chair Pham, Co-Chair Dembrow, and members of the Subcommittee,

On behalf of the Humane Society of the United States and our members and supporters in Oregon, I encourage this committee to fully fund the proposed Wildlife Coexistence Package as part of the 2023-2025 ODFW Budget.

We appreciated the opportunity for HSUS to serve on the Wildlife Response Taskforce led by Fish and Wildlife Commissioners, and we want to thank ODFW for their collaboration and commitment to invest meaningfully in resources that mitigate human-wildlife conflicts, inspire urban wildlife stewardship, and protect Oregon's wildlife.

Below is a link to the short presentation about the proposed wildlife coexistence funding package that staff presented at the April 2022 Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting.

https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/22/04_Apr/Presentation_Wildlife%20Response%20Work%20Group.pdf

Specifically, the Wildlife Coexistence Funding Package includes:

- **Wildlife Coexistence Biologists** focused on outreach, education, and response around human interactions with wildlife, and engaging and supporting Oregon's wildlife rehabilitators and other response partners. Distributed across state.
- **One Communications Coordinator** focused on developing and implementing proactive communications and stakeholder engagement aimed at promoting stewardship and preventing human wildlife conflicts.
- **\$400k for Living with Wildlife Campaign** (modeled after Anti-poaching Campaign)
- **\$300k grant program** to support wildlife rehabilitation centers.

As Oregon's population continues to expand, conflicts with wildlife can be expected to increase, making finding effective, humane, and sustaining means of conflict resolution a priority. Taking proactive steps through education and outreach to prevent conflicts from occurring, and providing humane and effective solutions when they do, is something that a diversity of wildlife stakeholders can get behind.

This investment would be incredibly worthwhile for Oregonians. By providing information and responses that help people make informed and appropriate decisions, it will reduce the likelihood of problems becoming exacerbated and animals being killed. Not only do these efforts prevent loss of wildlife, they reduce the costs and risks incurred by both the public and our responding agencies and personnel.

The Wildlife Coexistence Program will also provide much needed support for our state's nonprofit wildlife rehabilitation organizations, who are committed to caring for and conserving Oregon's wildlife while also serving as a hands-on, accessible resource for local communities, fielding thousands of calls each year.

According to survey results, 76% of Oregonians believe it is extremely important for fish and wildlife populations to be properly managed and conserved in Oregon, suggesting approval of more humane solutions and approaches to reducing and mitigating conflicts with wildlife.

While the Governor's proposed agency budget did not include funding for the Wildlife Coexistence Package, we believe this program is important and worthy of inclusion as it is a meaningful investment in promoting wildlife stewardship, preventing and reducing human-wildlife conflicts, engaging more Oregonians, and supporting wildlife rehabilitation efforts.

Thank you,

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