

Submitter: Lynn Herring  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure: SB5506

To the Joint Ways and Means Committee of the Oregon Legislature:

Regarding SB 5506 and the State Budget,

I urge you to support the following two critical funding requests for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW):

1) The \$187,000 biennium allocated for the Outreach and Community Engagement Project Leader of ODFW's Marine Reserve Program.

This position is critical to connect Oregon's coastal communities, visitors and others who care about our marine resources -- to the importance of Marine Reserves, the current system of 5 refugia in Oregon that provide a West Coast link with others north and south in Washington State and California. All of these Marine Reserves protect habitat and thus species, strengthen our resilience to climate change and contribute important science and monitoring to the very communities dependent on our ocean resources.

2) ODFW's establishment of a Wildlife Coexistence Program.

This package requests five biologist positions to expand education and outreach efforts focused on the urban and suburban environments on how to interact with wildlife and avoid conflicts, work with local governments, community groups, schools, and interested private citizens – and provide training sessions for those groups, law enforcement, and animal control. These biologists would also assist local wildlife rehabbers with understanding rules for holding and proper treatment of wildlife, conduct facility inspections and assist with permitting.

This is our watch. We are the stewards of our precious wildlife - marine and terrestrial. Funding these positions will pay off through education with better understanding of the importance of our natural resources and thus greater likelihood for their protection.

Thank You.

Lynn Herring

