



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Fish & Wildlife

4034 Fairview Industrial Dr. SE

Salem, OR. 97302

(503) 947-6044

(503) 947-6042

dfw.state.or.us

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**To: The Honorable Ken Helm, Co-Chair and the Honorable Mark Owens, Co-Chair
House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water**

House Bill 2343

Shaun Clements, Deputy Director for Fish and Wildlife Programs

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

The Department appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 2343, which extends the sunset date on the Columbia River Enhancement Fund to 2036 and makes no other changes.

The Columbia River Fisheries Enhancement Fund was established by the legislature via Senate Bill 830 in 2013 to provide funding to implement measures that enhance fisheries, optimize the economic benefits of fisheries, and advance native fish conservation related to the Columbia River fish management and reform (CR Reform) policy. The State of Washington has a similar policy to support joint-state management of non-tribal fisheries in the Columbia River. As part of Oregon's legislation, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission was authorized to charge an additional fee for recreational angling for salmon, steelhead, and sturgeon in the Columbia Basin, via the Columbia River Basin Endorsement (CRBE), to generate revenues for the enhancement fund. The fee established by the Commission is \$9.75/year or \$1/day which generates ~\$2 M in revenues per biennium. Revenue from this source is being used to:

- Fund increased hatchery production in off-channel areas of the lower Columbia River. This increased production supports increased off channel commercial harvest, which was needed to offset fishery allocation shifts. Recreational fisheries also account for ~34% of all fish harvested from these releases.
- Fund monitoring of recreational fisheries in Zone 6 (between Bonneville and McNary Dams) and in the lower river below Bonneville. This monitoring is critical to ensure that the Department can maximize open days while remaining within ESA allowable limits.
- Fund two full time Oregon State Police Fish and Wildlife unit troopers.

Per ORS 508.980 the fee and the fund will sunset January 2, 2026. House Bill 2343 would extend the sunset date to 2036. Continuing the Columbia River Basin Endorsement fee will contribute to stable future funding for fishery management in the Columbia River.

CONTACT: Shaun Clements, Deputy Director, (541) 223-8437