



National Headquarters

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House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

February 5, 2025

Re: HB 2984 – OCRF

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice Chair Finger McDonald, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Colin Reynolds. I am the Senior Advisor to the Northwest Program at Defenders of Wildlife (“Defenders”). Defenders is a national conservation organization dedicated to the protection of all native animals and plants in their natural communities, with over 40,000 members and supporters in Oregon. On behalf of Defenders, I am submitting the following comments in support of HB 2984. This bill would appropriate \$1,500,000 for deposit into the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund (“OCRF”).

Since its creation in 2019, The OCRF has been a very successful program that empowers the implementation of the Oregon Conservation Strategy and connects people with outdoor opportunities.ⁱ In 2024 alone,ⁱⁱ OCRF funded projects managed by various entities throughout the state, such as restoring nesting habitat for the Streaked Horned Lark along the Willamette Valleyⁱⁱⁱ and supporting avian monitoring programs in southeastern Oregon.^{iv}

Overall, the OCRF is a critical and cost-effective means by which Oregonians can support projects that restore ecosystems to benefit Oregon’s fish and wildlife while connecting communities to the outdoors and engaging Oregonians in the science and research needed to improve our understanding of Oregon’s biodiversity. In times when federal support is uncertain, we need to do our best to support funds like the OCRF which enable the implementation of projects for the benefit of Oregon’s biodiversity. Defenders strongly supports the OCRF and HB 2984, and we encourage you to do the same.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Colin Reynolds
Senior Advisor, Northwest Program
Defenders of Wildlife

ⁱ *Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund 2020 Annual Report*,
https://www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy/OCRF/docs/OCRAC_Annual_Report_Final.pdf.

ⁱⁱ *Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund Projects*, OREGON DEP'T OF FISH AND WILDLIFE,
<https://www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy/OCRF/projects.html>.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund Projects: Restoring nesting habitat for Streaked Horned Lark*, OREGON DEP'T OF FISH AND WILDLIFE,
https://www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy/OCRF/projects/2024-7/Streaked_Horned_Lark_Habitat.html.

^{iv} *Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund Projects: Avian Monitoring and Community Programs in Malheur*, OREGON DEP'T OF FISH AND WILDLIFE,
https://www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy/OCRF/projects/2024-7/Malheur_Avian_Monitoring.html