

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

February 4, 2025

Re: HB 2984 – OCRF

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

The Oregon Wildlife Foundation was founded in 1981 by members of the Fish & Wildlife Commission and business leaders to receive gifts for and distribute funding to fish and wildlife conservation projects. We've been an Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife partner from our beginning; collaborating with them on hundreds of projects and multiple initiatives throughout Oregon.

Establishment of the Oregon Conservation & Recreation (Fund) was no different. The Foundation was a supporter from the outset, working collaboratively with Department staff, private citizens, and elected officials to gain legislative approval for the Fund and then to engage in fundraising private match to secure the public funds set aside by the legislature.

The Fund has accomplished a lot since 2019:

- Distributed over \$5MM to 96 different organizations and 140 projects across all eight of Oregon's ecoregions
- Leveraged \$1.3MM in private funding support
- Developed and is implementing a strategic plan focused on operational excellence, strategic partnerships, building broader public awareness, and continually evaluating and investing in project priorities

The Fund is a unique source of funding support for conservation and outdoor recreation project concepts. There are few foundations in Oregon or regionally that give to wildlife conservation causes and even fewer that focus on outdoor or wildlife-related recreation.

Department staff and the Advisory Committee have developed an acumen for identifying and supporting meritorious projects and regardless of any funding shortfall, go the extra mile to help ensure that good projects receive consideration, even if it's elsewhere from a partner like us, Oregon Community Foundation, or philanthropists.

Finally, the Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund is a vehicle through which Oregon's sensitive and threatened species can receive the support they need to ensure their long-term conservation. When and as the federal government makes more funding available for non-game species conservation, the Fund is ready-made to put those dollars to work throughout Oregon's ecoregions.

We, at Oregon Wildlife Foundation, appreciate the Committee's thoughtful consideration of HB 2984 and urge your support.

Sincerely yours,



Tim Greseth
Executive Director