

Testimony on HB 2342

House Committee on [Committee Name]

Oregon State Capitol

900 Court St. NE

Salem, OR 97301

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

My name is Tristan Henry, and I serve as the Oregon Field Representative for the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP). Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 2342, which proposes updating the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's license, tag, and permit fee schedule—a critical investment in the science-based stewardship of our fish and wildlife.

As ODFW notes, fees from recreational licenses, tags, and permits account for about 40% of the agency's total budget—some \$137 million in direct license sales. These funds leverage an additional \$66 million in federal excise taxes, collectively supporting:

- Population Monitoring & Harvest Setting: Maintaining healthy deer, elk, salmon, and steelhead populations through robust data collection and research.
- Fish Propagation & Habitat Restoration: Managing hatcheries, improving critical habitats, and partnering with landowners to enhance watersheds.
- Access & Opportunity: Providing or enhancing public hunting and fishing access, benefiting both resident and visiting sportsmen.
- Law Enforcement: Collaborating with Oregon State Police to uphold wildlife laws that ensure long-term sustainability.

Oregon's last comprehensive fee bill was roughly 10 years ago, exceeding the usual 6-year cycle. Inflation and more complex conservation challenges have increased ODFW's costs. Without these adjustments, ODFW's ending fund balance will erode, risking cuts to core programs that are essential for wildlife health. The Hunting and fishing communities, support this and take pride in their role in this uniquely American institution. Every additional dollar raised in license fees enables

Oregon to capitalize on matching funds under Pittman-Robertson, Dingell-Johnson, and related programs.

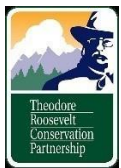
These user-based fees are foundational to the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, which emphasizes public trust resources, scientific management, and user-pay principles. As documented by the [Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies \(AFWA\)](#) and detailed in The Wildlife Society's publication, *The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation* (TWS, 2014), continued investment from license-buyers has proven instrumental in restoring and maintaining healthy fish and wildlife populations across Oregon.

Key Provisions:

- **Gradual, Predictable Increases:** Ensuring sportsmen and sportswomen can adjust financially to fee changes.
- **Special Considerations for Youth and Seniors:** Keeping costs modest for young, disabled veteran, and senior participants.
- **New Ocean Endorsement:** An annual/daily fee to fund nearshore stock monitoring—expanding our understanding of marine fisheries and preserving future angling opportunities.

On behalf of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership and many dedicated sportsmen and sportswomen, I encourage your support of HB 2342. By updating ODFW's fee structure, we reinforce the longstanding principles of the North American Model—providing stable funding for research, habitat projects, and access enhancements, all while leveraging critical federal dollars.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



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Appendix:

1. Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA)

The North American Model: A Decadal Review (2024)

https://www.fishwildlife.org/application/files/1017/1943/1567/The_North_American_Model_Decadal_Review_6.2024.pdf

2. The Wildlife Society (TWS)

North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (2014) <https://wildlife.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/North-American-model-of-Wildlife-Conservation.pdf>