



Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair McDonald and Committee members,

Good morning. My name is Dave Schamp and I'm here today on behalf of the Oregon Chapter of the Coastal Conservation Association to comment on HB 2342, which will increase license fees for the hundreds of thousands of sport anglers who are the largest source of revenue for ODFW.

This is a tough issue for our membership. We recognize that costs are going up, the legislature has not approved a fee increase since 2015 and a well-funded agency is important. It is also true that fishing opportunities are decreasing, and restrictions are expanding which makes it challenging to encourage support for HB 2342. "Pay more and get less" is not appealing but seems an accurate reflection of what is currently happening.

CCA Oregon signed in today as neutral on the proposed fee changes. The main reason for our neutrality is because it's too early to support, or oppose, fee increases until we know what that represents while many policy decisions are yet to be made by the legislature and ODFW. So today I want to let you know what our members need to support these increases:

First, a commitment to improve hatchery production, which means increased funding for both operations and deferred maintenance. This will require at least \$20M in state capital funding this biennium, navigating difficult budget challenges like fending off a misleading anti-hatchery narrative and a rebuild of some nature at Rock Creek. Sport anglers have already stepped up to support HB 2345, which redirects an existing license surcharge to create a Hatchery Monitoring and Maintenance Fund.

Second, ODFW must work to prioritize recreational fishing opportunities.

Adoption of these proposed fees will likely reduce the number of licenses sold. The best way to blunt that outcome is to be very intentional about enhancing and prioritizing recreational fishing opportunities. The legislature should work with ODFW to resolve policy issues that continue to reduce recreational fishing opportunity, including the failure to fully implement the Columbia River fishery reforms first enacted by this legislature in 2013. ODFW should also do more to advocate for reductions in the harvest of Oregon salmon in ocean fisheries off the coasts of Alaska, BC, and Washington – this would benefit conservation and the anglers here in Oregon who foot much of the bill to produce those fish.

Finally, increased state investments need to be made in ODFW.

Continuing to balance ODFW's budget on the backs of hunters and anglers is not sustainable. Some of the proposed fee increases are significant. For example, in 2025 the license fee cost to fish for salmon in the ocean is \$89 (license, tag). If the proposed fees are adopted, it will cost that same angler \$129 in 2026. That is a whopping 44% increase.

All Oregonians have a responsibility to help fund ODFW and mitigate the impacts of development on our fish and wildlife. More state funding is needed to meet that obligation. Hunters and anglers are the best advocates for the protection and preservation of our natural resources and it's to the point where many can no longer afford to participate in the sport they love.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill 2342. It is a part of an interdependent package of license fee revenue, state funding, and important policy changes needed to create a vibrant future for Oregon's fisheries.