

Submitter: Dana Roberts

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On
Natural Resources

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5009

April 1, 2025

Senator Lew Frederick, Co-Chair
Representative Emerson Levy, Co-Chair
Members of the Committee

Re: Opposition to ODFW's Budget Bill (HB5009)

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and Levy and Members of the Subcommittee

My name is Dana Roberts and I am here today to oppose ODFW's Budget bill (HB 5009) as submitted, which understates the other fund revenue available. The revenue projection supporting the GRB is over a year old and does not include actual revenue for most of 2024. I have provided written testimony, with attachments to Chair Frederick, that supports my public comments today to your committee.

First, ODFW has \$133.9 million other fund cash on hand (February 2025) which is \$24 million above the beginning balance of \$109.9 million in ODFW's budget for the 25-27 biennium. When the highest revenue months of April and May 2025 are added; ODFW's revenue could exceed \$150 million to start the new biennium. Note: license sales in 2024 were up \$2.4 million (4%) higher than license sales in 2023 and license products increased by 116,000 (3%) from 2023 (See pg. 8 of ODFW reference materials). These increases are not in the GRB revenue projections.

Don't take my word for it; ask ODFW to update their other fund revenue projections for the 23-25 biennium and the 25-27 biennium which are a year old.

Second, ODFW leads you to believe only recreational license fees are available to maintain a reasonable operating cash balance. I was part of the public review process that set the 2015 fee schedules. We considered all other funds (license, restricted and obligated) when we considered a reasonable operating cash balance. Restricted funds include the Commercial Fish Fund (\$12.2 million); ODFW's administrative indirect Charge of 25.71% on contracts (\$27.4 million); Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund (\$15.4 million) etc.

Holding \$60+ million in license fees in the checkbook means recreational users are not getting the services we deserve and pay for.

Third, I cannot support a budget that closes two hatcheries and eliminates another hatchery steelhead run on one of Oregon's rivers; (all hatchery steelhead on the North Umpqua).

Fourth, I cannot support a budget that increases fees for Oregon residents to catch a salmon in the ocean by 42.2% (\$90 to \$128)

Fifth, ODFW's budget continues to prioritize building new regional offices John Day (\$2.1 million), North Willamette (\$2.1million), Deschutes (\$4.35 million), and Rogue (\$5.25 million); while fire damaged hatcheries have not been repaired and many of the other hatcheries are in such bad shape.

In closing, Requiring ODFW to up-date it's other fund revenue projections will allow you to reject the recreational license fee increases, not close hatcheries, and restore hatchery steelhead on the North Umpqua and increase smolt releases on the Siletz.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on ODFW's budget.

Dana Roberts
Salem