



ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION

Testimony Before the Joint Ways and Means Sub-Committee on Natural Resources

April 2, 2025

Subject: HB 5009 – Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Budget

Co-Chairs Senator Fredrick and Representative Levy and members of the Committee

My name is David Wiley. I live in Sublimity, Oregon. I am a member of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) and a Lead Volunteer for the Elk Foundation in Oregon. Today I am speaking to you on behalf of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

The RMEF is a national non-profit hunter sponsored conservation organization whose mission is to ensure the future of elk, other wildlife, their habitat, and our hunting heritage. RMEF has more than 200,000 members nationwide and more than 12,000 in Oregon. Since 1986 within Oregon, RMEF and its partners have completed more than 1,100 wildlife habitat stewardship, management and hunting heritage projects. These projects conserved and enhanced more than 890,000 acres and improved recreational access to 157,000 acres.

RMEF strongly supports HB 5009, the ODFW budget, and recommends it for this Sub-Committee's full support, approval, and passage to Joint Ways and Means with a do-pass recommendation.

Additionally, I wish to state RMEF fully supports and recommends approval of HB 2342 increasing license and tag fees, which our members pay, and which increases revenue in support of HB 5009.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) is a premier wildlife management and conservation agency and is widely respected by its peers for its laser focus on its mission and application of the best science and data to drive its actions.

ODFW conducted much outreach to stakeholders and heard their concerns, prior to preparing both HB 5009 - the budget and HB 2342 - the fee increase.

Regarding HB 5009, RMEF recommends restoring two General Fund programs to the ODFW's budget:

- The Anti-Poaching Program (\$1.3 million GF)
 - ODFW (\$600,000 GF)
 - OSP (\$680,000 GF)
- Predator Control Program (\$430,000 GF)



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RMEF wishes to highlight the absolute necessity for continuance of POP 115 – Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Surveillance Program which is predicated upon approval of HB 2342 – the ODFW fees increase bill. CWD is an always fatal neurological disease which affects deer, elk and moose. It is found in all three of our neighboring states -Washington, Idaho and California. Oregon does not have CWD in its deer and elk herds and we need to keep out!

Passage of HB 5009 is essential for provision of the current level of core wildlife and fisheries management services in the Governor's recommended ODFW budget.

Oregon's Licensed Hunters and Fishers take great pride in the fact they are the principal funders of Conservation in the state.

Hunting and Fishing are Wildlife Conservation!

Please give HB 5009 your stamp of approval.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Are there any questions?