

Submitter: Mark Hutchinson
On Behalf Of: NW Steelheaders
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On
Capital Construction
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5505

NW Steelheaders supports this bill and would ask that the amount of bonding be doubled to \$50 million a year for the following reasons:

These hatcheries are critical to supporting the state's fisheries, people, and wildlife by producing salmon, steelhead, and trout and releasing them into the wild.

The hatcheries play a vital role in sustaining a recreational fishery, providing a measure to keep salmon and steelhead from becoming extinct, and introducing a keystone species to support other wildlife in our lakes, rivers, and oceans.

ODFW operates a network of 33 aging hatcheries that have been maintained on a shoestring budget. Most of these hatcheries are over 50 years old, and some are approaching 100 years. Well-funded, planned capital improvement programs prevent failures and emergency projects that cost substantially more, (2.5 times more). The design and construction costs will reduce long-term expenditures.

Northwest Steelheaders participated in a stakeholder group led by ODFW to evaluate key components in hatchery resilience, considering factors such as the changing environment (less precipitation, stronger storms, higher summer temperatures), rising maintenance costs, increased rate of breakdowns, rising utility costs, and improvements in technology and environmental considerations.

The money used for rehabilitating these facilities will also stimulate the economies in the small towns where most of the hatcheries reside, communities plagued by fire, loss of logging and fishing revenues.

The report referenced above indicates well over \$100 million in deferred maintenance as anyone knows who has remodeled a house or facility, once you study things in detail, costs go up. A program well-funded over several years will reduce costs of design and construction as engineers and construction people learn and develop skills, and ODFW develops staff to administer the program. We also recommend the restoration of the original ODFW requested pops involving hatcheries, law enforcement, biologists, the antipoaching program, and fish monitoring activities.