

Submitter:	Ray Temple
On Behalf Of:	Self
Committee:	House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic:	HB2977

In the 1990's ODFW established a "non-game wildlife" program to house conservation management of the non-hunted, non- angled species over which the agency has management responsibility per ORS 494 (1), ORS 496.012 and others. The program was well received by the conservation community as ODFW's acknowledgement of the scope of its responsibilities. It was funded by the Wildlife Fund, Department revenues from license and tag purchases by hunters and anglers. That use of Wildlife Fund for activities not directly benefiting the payers was protested and found to be inappropriate. General Fund revenues accrued from across the population of Oregon were not available and the program was lost. Fast forward, in the intervening decades the Legislature has failed to provide a funding mechanism that would provide sustainable funding for conservation in the interest of all Oregonians despite several proposals to do so. One of the more harmful consequences has been a chasm in trust and collaboration between elements of the conservation community and the Department over what is seen as a default to priority management for hunted and angles species, despite the co-equality directed ORS 496.012. Where hunters, anglers, and the conservation community should be pressing the Legislature for common management goals there is distrust and lack of understanding. The Audubon chapter to which I belong sees no contribution by ODFW to conserving native birds. There is room on both sides for better understanding backed by demonstrated action.

Lack of stable funding is at the heart of these issues. It affects what ODFW does, and has deeply eroded the public support that ODFW badly needs politically to effectively support it's entire statutory mission. Please support HB2977 to establish and fund the Recovering Oregon's Wildlife sub-account. Having these state funds available for direct use by ODFW and to provide the required match for any Federal grant funds that come available will start recovery of both the species affected and the relationship of the agency and stakeholders.