

Exhibit B

**Supplemental
Public Correspondence received as of
June 6, 2018**

Roxann B Borisch

From: Kahreen Tebeau <kahreen.tebeau@TNC.ORG>
Sent: Tuesday, June 5, 2018 11:50 PM
To: odfw.commission@state.or.us
Subject: The Nature Conservancy Comments on 2019-21 ODFW Budget
Attachments: TNC Comments to ODFW Commission June 5 2018 FINAL.pdf

Hello,

Please find our comments on ODFW's proposed 2019-21 budget (Exhibit B on the Commission's June 7-8 meeting agenda). We'd like to thank the Commission in advance for considering our comments.

Best regards,
Kahreen

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State Government Relations Director

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June 5, 2018

Mike Finley, Chair
Members of the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, OR 97302-1142

Subject: Proposed 2019-2021 ODFW Budget

Dear Chair Finley and Members of the Commission,

On behalf of The Nature Conservancy, I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the proposed 2019-2021 budget for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Nature Conservancy is a science-based, non-partisan, and collaborative conservation organization, and our mission is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. The Conservancy was incorporated in Oregon in 1961 and now has over 50,000 supporters in Oregon with members in every county. We have offices in Enterprise, Burns, Bend, Klamath Falls, Medford, Eugene, The Dalles, and Portland. We work with a broad range of partners, including agricultural, timber, fishing and recreational interests; tribes; government agencies; elected officials; university researchers; community organizations; and other conservation stakeholders to accomplish our mission.

The Conservancy is very supportive of the Department of Fish and Wildlife's base programs and the value they bring to habitat, fish, and wildlife. We do not want to see these programs cut or reduced. In addition, we've highlighted specific program areas below, related to water quality and quantity, sage-grouse, and fisheries, where we would like to see new funding applied.

Water Quality and Quantity:

The Conservancy supports three of ODFW's POPs directly related to the upcoming removal of four hydroelectric dams on the Klamath River by 2021. Dam removal will allow volitional fish passage to potential habitat in the Upper Klamath Basin (420 miles of streams and river will become accessible for the first time in 100 years), and improve flow variability and water quality. This is an unprecedented opportunity for the state to take action to help recover fish populations in the Upper Klamath Basin. For this reason, we enthusiastically support the following three POPs:

- POP #109: Klamath Anadromous Fish Reintroduction Plan
- POP #125: Klamath Anadromous Fish Reintroduction Hatchery
- POP #126: Klamath Anadromous Fish Reintroduction MRE

In addition, we strongly support the following POPs:

- POP #102-103: Oregon Conservation Strategy Farm Bill Biologists. There are many opportunities to improve habitat for fish on private farm land and forest land. This POP will provide for the continuation of an ODFW biologist to act as a liaison between ODFW and NRCS for development and implementation of projects on private lands.
- POP #104. Culvert Fish Passage. Many conservation organizations and the state have contributed to making significant progress in replacing high priority culverts over the past decade. Replacing culverts is critical to allow volitional fish movement. This POP will support ongoing improvements to fish passage across the state associated with ODOT projects.
- POP #123: Restore and Enhance Water Quality and Quantity. The Department plays a key role in implementing strategies in the Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS). This POP will fund staff positions to work proactively to address key water quality and quantity issues for Oregon, including working on in-stream water rights and the IWRS.
- POP #124: Restore Western Oregon Stream Restoration Program. This program is essential for on-the-ground restoration of stream habitat throughout western Oregon. As a result, the program also supports the recovery of native fish species throughout western Oregon.

Sage-Grouse Action Plan: The State of Oregon made significant investments in the development of an All Lands Oregon Sage-Grouse Action Plan. Through Governor Brown's accompanying Executive Order 15-18, the State made a commitment to strong implementation to benefit sage-grouse. This commitment was an important part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's decision not to list the species under the federal Endangered Species Act.

Section 3(1) of the Executive Order directs the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, along with the Department of Land Conservation and Development and Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, to identify and prioritize resources needed for successful implementation of the Action Plan:

Exec. Order 15-18, Section 3(1): "Every two years, beginning in May of 2016, DLCD, ODFW, and OWEB shall prepare a proposed budget for the coming biennium that identifies and prioritizes resources required to continue the successful implementation of the Oregon Sage-Grouse Action Plan."

We remain concerned that the 2017-2019 enacted budget was significantly lower than the overall budget approved in the 2015-2017 biennium. We strongly support the direction contained in the Executive Order and urge the staff and Commission to propose a strong investment in implementation during the FY 2019-2021 biennium. The State should take stock of the progress that has been made to date, lessons learned, and the critical needs for sage-grouse in the coming

biennium. The existing investments in sage grouse programs contained in ODFW base budgets should be maintained. And, in our view, additions to the base budget for sage grouse are needed to meet the state's responsibilities and obligations under the Action Plan.

We respectfully request ODFW request an additional \$400,000 to fund the essential ODFW Field Positions necessary to coordinate the interagency, public/private Local Implementation Teams (LITs) charged with implementing the Action Plan.

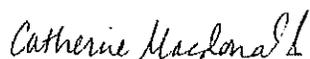
In addition, we encourage ODFW to include an additional POP request for \$10,000,000 to begin to invest in the sage grouse mitigation program, and specifically, mitigation credit generation. With the potential industrial developments on the horizon in southeast Oregon, including mining and solar energy development, it is important to start generating mitigation credits as soon as possible. Generating sale-ready credits in advance of development and impacts will protect both sage-grouse and the economic interests of southeastern Oregon.

Nearshore Fisheries Research and Improving Fisheries Management: Oregon's nearshore resources, such as rockfish and cabezon, are vitally important to coastal communities. These fish are a critical part of the commercial fishery's portfolio, particularly on Oregon's South Coast. Recreational fishermen coastwide also depend on this resource, especially in summer months.

While the economic value of this fishery is clear, the State lacks the staff and financial resources to ensure sustainable management. There are little to no fishery independent information collected, reducing the State's ability to effectively assess nearshore fish stocks. As a result, the State must rely on the National Marine Fisheries Service to develop allowable harvest levels and apportionment of catch to the waters off Oregon as well as supplement the analysis of the impacts of fishing and fishery regulations to stock health and human communities. We ask that the Commission support POP #118 and provide \$1.385M in funding to develop a nearshore program that would put the State in the driver seat for management of our important nearshore fisheries and provide the capacity necessary to ensure sustainable fishery management.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed budget, and for your consideration of this input.

Sincerely,



Catherine Macdonald
Director of Policy and External Affairs

Cc: Jason Miner, Governor Brown's Natural Resource Policy Manager