

Public Forum  
Craig Starr

## Public Forum Remarks – June 6, 2019

Chair Finley, Commissioners and Director Melcher,

My name is Craig Starr and I live at 2105 Desiree Place, Lebanon, Oregon. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this morning.

I recently purchased 2019 Turkey and Controlled Angling tags, and I was struck again by the high cost of these tags. I recently sent you E-mail messages regarding the cost of both tags, but I want to address my concerns to you more publicly here today. I believe costs of both the Turkey and the Controlled Angling tags are relics from years past when circumstances were significantly different than they are today. I think both tags are now overpriced for the value that sportsmen and sportswomen receive from purchasing those tags.

I would urge you to consider making the following changes to ODFW's current Turkey and Combined Angling tags:

1. Reduce the cost of a Turkey tag to a more reasonable figure, say between \$10 and \$15. I know ODFW would be concerned about a potential loss of revenue from such an action, but they already essentially give away 35,000-40,000 Turkey tags with Sports Pacs. And, a lower tag cost may well result in hunters purchasing more 2nd and 3rd Turkey tags reducing any possible adverse revenue impacts from lowering the Turkey tag cost. If reducing the cost of an initial Turkey tag is a fiscal concern, at least consider reducing the cost of subsequent Turkey tags after purchase of an initial \$25.50 tag.
2. With respect to the Combined Angling tag, separate the Halibut and Sturgeon tag(s) from the Salmon and Steelhead tag since relatively few anglers likely fish for all three (3) species and reduce the cost of a separate Salmon and Steelhead tag commensurately. The fees charged for separate Halibut and Sturgeon tags should offset any loss of revenue from a reduced cost for a separate Salmon and Steelhead tag.
3. Offer a new, reduced-catch Salmon and Steelhead tag for the more casual fisherman, like me, that would limit retention to only five (5) salmon or steelhead per year at a lower cost than the current Combined Angling tag. I think a cost between \$15 and \$20 for such a tag would be quite reasonable and might attract fishermen who are turned off by the current high cost of the Combined Angling tag. A 20-fish Salmon and Steelhead tag could continue to be sold to the more dedicated anglers.

I understand that at least some of the proposed changes might require legislative action, but I believe the Oregon Legislature would look favorably on an ODFW concept to reduce tag costs by reorganizing how they are offered to reflect an updated reality of Turkey and salmon/steelhead populations (especially with respect to conserving wild fish). Reducing the cost of anything probably isn't something they get to do very often!!

