



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The Legislature created the Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund in 2019 through House bill 2829. The legislation also created the Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee and required the Department to deposit \$1 million in to the Fund from non-state and non-federal sources in order to access a \$1 million special appropriation from the General Fund.

The Commission adopted OARs 635.098 in October of 2019 to create the nine-member Advisory Committee. Six members represent the Ecoregions of the state as described in the Oregon Conservation Strategy and three members are at-large representatives. Commissioner Mark Labhart and the Director of the Oregon Office of Outdoor Recreation, Cailin O'Brien-Feeny are non-voting participants on the Advisory Committee.

The intent of the Conservation & Recreation Fund was to increase the Department's capacity to implement the recommendations of the Oregon Conservation Strategy, but the Fund sunsets at the end of the 2019-2021 biennium. Thus, the Advisory Committee is recommending expenditures from the Fund to support the work of conservation partners in the state to implement the Oregon Conservation Strategy and improve equitable access to wildlife-associated, recreation activities like community science, wildlife viewing, and urban conservation.

The Advisory Committee met 8 times virtually between March and August 2020. All of these meetings have been virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The members of the Committee have developed operating procedures, an expenditure framework, and a short-term expenditure portfolio to make recommendations quickly that demonstrate their charge. These early projects seek to support future fundraising efforts by providing more clarity to donors on the intent of the Fund.

As of August 2020, despite many delays and setbacks related to the COVID-19 situation, the Department and partners have generated approximately \$100,000 from non-state and non-federal sources with a few large commitments in the works. This includes donations from over 9,000 individuals.

The Advisory Committee has recommended \$60,456 in expenditures for consideration by the Commission today.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

All of the Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee members are open to public participation and have time on the agenda for comments from participating members of the public. In advance of the May 5th meeting, the Committee sent a set of framing questions to stakeholders including:

- What should be the highest priority uses of the Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund in the short term?
- What types of projects do your members/customers/constituents expect this Fund to support?
- Does your organization have specific projects or project ideas that you believe would meet the purposes of this Fund?
- Do you have a "big picture" vision of the long term role that the OCRF can play in promoting Oregon's statewide conservation and recreational efforts?

Public responses to these questions were referenced as the Committee worked on determining their program priorities and operating principles throughout May, June, and July. Responses were received from 45 organizations.

ISSUE 1

Conservation & Recreation Fund Expenditure Recommendations

ANALYSIS

A summary of the Advisory Committee's process and the recommendations are provided in Attachment 2. A summary of the projects not recommended for funding at this time are in Attachment 3. The Committee has not rejected these projects, but limited their recommendations to \$60,000 and therefore cannot recommending funding these 10 projects at this time.

OPTIONS

1. Approve Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee recommendations for project funding.
2. Reject project proposals

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Option 1. Approve the eight projects recommended by the Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee.

DRAFT MOTION:

I move to approve the eight (8) projects recommended for funding by the Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee.

Effective Date: September 11, 2020