

Restoration & Enhancement Program

30 years of strengthening fishing



2019-2021 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

At a new children's pond in Prineville, children catch their first rainbow trout. While at a Benton County hatchery, winter steelhead eggs incubate and volunteers rear the smolts before releasing them into the Alsea River. Projects in streams throughout the state restore habitat, allowing fish to pass easily to spawning grounds. All of this thanks to investments by the ODFW Fish Restoration & Enhancement program (R&E).

R&E was established by the Oregon Legislature in 1989 to invigorate the state's commercial and recreational fisheries. Since then some \$60 million – raised from recreational fishing license fees and commercial salmon fees – have been invested.

HATCHERIES

32 hatcheries raise **50 million+** salmon, steelhead and trout annually

In response to audit findings in 2015, ODFW began targeting priority projects that directly address the deferred maintenance backlog at ODFW facilities. For the 2019-21 biennium, R&E awarded a bundle grant of \$2.0M for facility upkeep, including repairs of the fish ladder at Willamette Falls, improving water intakes at hatcheries, and helping hatcheries recover from wildfires.

ANGLER ACCESS

\$1,300,000

in 2019-2021 to make fishing better

ODFW focuses on providing consistent and accessible fishing experiences for all Oregonians. R&E-funded projects create paved pathways, new docks, fish cleaning stations, and restrooms that are ADA-compliant and user-friendly. In Bandon there's a new fishing pier on the bay, while Wallowa County received a new fishing park with docks and pathways. Volunteers in Jefferson installed parking associated with a new boat ramp.

FISH POPULATION ENHANCEMENT

The R&E Board focuses on tangibly lifting fish populations to benefit anglers or facilitate delisting. Fish habitat, screening, passage and monitoring projects all play a role. Here are some examples from 2019-2021:

Willamette Falls Ladder: R&E awarded \$1.4M to repair one of the most important and highest-priority fish passage structures in the state.

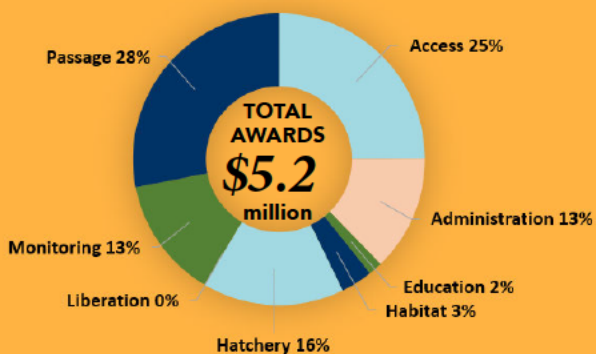
Over 17-miles of habitat improved on South Fork Little Butte Creek in Jackson County. With \$93K in R&E funds, Trout Unlimited was able to improve fish habitat for Chinook, Coho and Steelhead by restoring stream flows and creating an in-stream water right from an irrigation right.

Invasive Fish Removal: In central Oregon, R&E funding allowed OSU to provide interns to assist ODFW with efforts to remove chub from East, Paulina and Lava Lakes. Removing chub by trap nets makes fishing better by improving trout condition, growth rates and abundance.

In 2019-21,
every R&E dollar
 awarded leveraged
\$1.33
 in matching
 contributions

The need continues. While R&E awards in 2019-21 addressed **\$1.8 million** in deferred maintenance at state facilities, a backlog of at least **\$25 million** remains.

Awards by Project Type 2019-21



46% of awards went to Restoration and 54% were designated for Enhancement, meeting the statutory requirement for balance of funding.

7% of revenues and 12% of benefits were related to commercial fishing, meeting the statutory requirement to spend in proportion to revenues.

Fishing creates **23,600 jobs**
 and generates **\$730 million**
 in income for businesses.

Source: https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/budget/docs/13-15_budget_bid_forms/635_ODFW_Capital_Improvements_Round_2.pdf

SIGNIFICANT NEED INSPIRED PROGRAM

When R&E began, the state’s hatcheries were more than 50 years old and in disrepair. In many cases fish runs were low and starting to be listed under the Endangered Species Act. More people were coming to Oregon and fishing was fueling an increase in tourism. R&E was designed to correct a “legacy of neglect.”

Numerous examples proved the need. For instance, Cedar Creek Hatchery in Tillamook County required significant repairs, including replacing a rotting pipeline that could have broken and ruined the entire hatchery production. R&E repaired and modernized this and other hatcheries, while also supporting habitat improvements to protect crucial spawning areas and increase natural fish production.

R&E BENEFITS

Allocations are made with anglers in mind. The R&E Board also prioritizes projects that leverage money from other sources to get the greatest benefit from its budget. These allocations:

- Support a commercial fishing industry that is vital to coastal economies
- Improve fishing opportunities and access to fishing areas for everyone
- Restore aquatic resources, which enhance fish populations

R&E’S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A seven-member Board, appointed by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission, includes three sport fishing representatives, three commercial salmon fishing representatives, and one public representative. The Board holds 3-4 public meetings per year to:

- Distribute funds to balance restoration of existing infrastructure and enhancement of fishing and fisheries
- Ensure funding benefits the sport and commercial interests in proportion to generated revenues
- Make good use of angler revenues

Recommendations are forwarded to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission for final approval.

The full version of this report is available online at www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/RE/history under the “R&E Legislative reports” heading.

