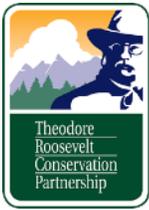


Exhibit A

Director Recruitment

**Public Correspondence received
as of January 26, 2024**



Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership January 25, 2024

Re: Emphasizing the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation in ODFW Director Recruitment

Members of the Oregon State Game Commission,

Owing to the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, Americans hold dear to the most in-tact suite of wildlife remaining on our planet. Oregonians - Hunters, Anglers, and Foragers in particular, take great pride in being both the beneficiaries and the stewards of our Natural Resources. Our commitment to the stewardship of Oregon's incredible wildlife is deeply rooted in the egalitarian principles of Public Trust Wildlife Conservation and forged by hunters and anglers who recognized humanity's capacity to effect change. This model, we believe, should remain foundational to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's leadership and direction. As the Commission considers candidates for the next Director of ODFW, we urge you to prioritize candidates who demonstrate a strong commitment to and understanding of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation as well as an understanding of other emerging strategies in beneficial wildlife management.

This model has been a cornerstone of wildlife management in North America, emphasizing sustainable use, scientific management, and the allocation of wildlife resources for the benefit of all citizens. Furthermore, we wish to highlight the significant financial contributions made by hunters and anglers to wildlife management in Oregon. As per the 2021-2023 biennium revenue report, a substantial portion of ODFW's funding comes from hunting and fishing license sales, tags, and related activities. Our community not only contributes through direct financial means but also through active participation in conservation and habitat restoration efforts. We believe that this contribution and involvement must be recognized and valued in the selection process for the new Director.

In light of this, we propose the following considerations for the recruitment process:

- **Prioritize Knowledge of the North American Model:** The new Director should have a thorough understanding of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation and a proven track record of implementing its principles in wildlife management strategies.
- **Recognize the Role of Hunters and Anglers:** The new Director should acknowledge the significant role that hunters and anglers play in funding wildlife conservation efforts in Oregon and should be committed to maintaining and enhancing this partnership.
- **Inclusive and Balanced Stakeholder Engagement:** The Director should be adept at balancing the diverse interests of all stakeholders, including those primarily engaged in wildlife viewing, habitat protection, and conservation, while also recognizing the crucial role of traditional stakeholders in wildlife management.

We trust that the Commission will consider these aspects with the gravity they deserve, ensuring that the next Director of ODFW is well-equipped to lead our state's wildlife management into a future that honors our heritage, respects our contributions, and continues to uphold the principles of sound, science-based wildlife conservation.

Thank you for your consideration of our perspective in this important decision-making process.

Tristan Henry | Oregon Field Representative, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

 www.trcp.org

 tHenry@trcp.org



Chair Wahl and Members of the Commission Oregon
Fish and Wildlife Commission
odfw.commission@odfw.oregon.gov

January 25, 2024

**Re: Director Recruitment Plan/ Written Testimony ODFW Commission Meeting
1/26/24**

Dear Chair Wahl and Commissioners,

On behalf of the Central Oregon chapter of the Great Old Broads for Wilderness, I am submitting the following comments regarding the hiring process for a new Director by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission. We are part of a national grassroots organization, led by women, that engages and inspires activism to preserve and protect wilderness, wild lands, and wildlife habitat. Our local chapter of 100 plus members is one of 40 chapters throughout the nation that works on conservation issues to protect and restore fish and wildlife species and their native habitats.

We thank the Commission for being transparent and providing opportunities for public engagement through this hiring process. However, we request in the future that there is more than a 24-hour notice to engage the public. Minimally, we request at least a week's notice. This would ensure more adequate notice for broader community involvement and more meaningful public participation.

We urge the Commission to select potential candidates that will consider the interests of all Oregonians, not just the traditional hunting and angling crowd. It is very important to recognize that there are very diverse perspectives and concerns throughout Oregon. We recommend that the Commission look externally and strongly consider candidates with conservation backgrounds. The culture of the Department needs a change from primarily considering game species to a bigger picture for protections for all native fish and wildlife species and their habitats. Since the previous Director was hired in 2014, climate change and loss of biodiversity have become the most critical twin crises of our times. We need a director that is engaged with these issues and will take a stronger stance on protecting and restoring all native populations and habitats on public and private lands.

We strongly advocate for candidates who are committed to ending the hunting and trapping of beavers in Oregon. The restoration of beavers is not only essential for the species recovery but will play a major role in expanding wildlife habitats, storing water, restoring native salmonids, and protecting communities from wildfires. We also strongly

advocate for better management of wolves. The senseless slaughter of wolves ignores their role as a keystone species in our ecosystem. We want to see candidates who are dedicated to employing science-based carnivore management and coexistence philosophies and practices. It is also important that candidates comprehend the science behind the operations of fish hatcheries and are ready and willing to advocate for the discontinuation of programs that can be detrimental to wild, native fish populations. The future Director must be devoted to protecting native species first and foremost, and who will not bend to the will of special interest groups.

Again, it is of the utmost importance that candidates are chosen who grasp the severity of climate and extinction crises. We are in an environmental emergency and it is a critical time to protect biodiversity, which means taking some controversial actions at times. We hope that our leaders would not be swayed or afraid to make some very difficult decisions. Taking a stand to end hunting and trapping of beavers on public lands is one example of a tough position to take.

Thank you for considering our request. The decisions made throughout this process will shape the future of ODFW, our environment, and native fish and wildlife for generations to come. We would like to work with ODFW to address these very serious concerns.

Sincerely,

Mary Fleischmann

Leader, Central Oregon Bitterbrush Broads & Bro's
Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Bend, Oregon

From: [Bernice Rossana](#)
To: [ODFW Commission * ODFW](#)
Subject: Hiring+new+ODFW+Director
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024 7:11:40 PM

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Please choose a person who will actually protect our wildlife, who shows a passion for truth and is transparent in their decisions. Over and over I have seen the bad decision making with ODFW because of favoritism to a special group and lack of total understanding for the needs of one of our most important resources..... our wildlife. A see presently the desire to eradicate a predator species, our wolves, which are a necessity for the state due to special interests wants. For once we need a person who doesn't bend to bullying. Possibly with that kind of leadership ODFW can be looked to with pride rather than embarrassment.

From: [Gisela Ryter](#)
To: [ODFW Commission * ODFW](#)
Subject: Hiring+new+ODFW+Director
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024 6:07:12 PM

[You don't often get email from giselavest@icloud.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

I applaud you for being transparent and for giving the public a voice in the hiring process, but also give us a little more time. Most of us are working people with families. Our personal time is short and valuable.

Please consider in your candidate selection the interests of all Oregonians, not just the hunters and fishermen. That includes people who want to protect beavers from extinction, help us store water and help protect communities from wild fires.

Re: wolves please choose candidates who recognize wolves' important role in the environment. The candidate should understand and be committed to follow the science on carnivore management and coexistence practices that have proven to work.

Candidates must also be cognizant of the negative impact of fish hatcheries on wild species. We need someone bold and who will be immune to the pressures from special interest group as far as climate change and the other issues are concerned. It's a tall order. But you can do it, I know. Thank you. Gisela Ryter, Bend

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Heidi Supkis](#)
To: [ODFW Commission * ODFW](#)
Subject: Hiring+new+ODFW+Director
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024 5:39:43 PM

You don't often get email from heidi.supkis@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear ODFW Commission,

This public meeting is on short notice and I feel blindsided for not being better informed.

My input is required and my commitment to action is herein fulfilled.

Important decisions will be made regarding the priorities, direction and culture of the Dept.

***You have the task** at hand to lead and to be practical in the process. The selection of a new Director is*

*very serious and will set the course for many years to come. The ODFW is **not** the same institution it was 10-20 years ago.*

The rural inhabitants, living on the landscape, no longer depend on hunting as a “way of life”. They buy food at the grocery store.

The public needs to weigh in on conservation issues and participate in the “by- in “ that large predators are now on the landscape.

***Re-Wilding** is not a new concept. The world wide movement to reintroduce endangered animals is happening.*

Interconnecting land corridors must be managed to facilitate the movement and migrations of our wildlife.

The Hunting traditions of “yesterday-year” are not as prevalent and most families do not depend on wild meat from hunting season

for their daily food. In the 14 years that I have resided in Central Oregon, I have never been invited to share in a wild meat dinner.

Even fish have not been shared - the local reservoirs are shrinking and suffering during the prolonged drought conditions. Habitat is at risk.

*Hydro damns have limited our indigenous species and their survival. We need to make changes here folks. **No more business as usual.***

CHANGE is in the air. Climate, vegetation, human population impacts and the role we play in managing our wild resources is evolving.

*We appreciate transparency and public engagement. In closing , please take seriously your role in this service to the public. Use **SCIENCE***

in making decisions. I and my spouse both are graduates from the College of Forestry, Range and Wildlife from the University of Idaho. (1980’s)

Professional research and technology play an important role as we move forward

into the next decades.

Thank you for your attention.

Respectfully,

Heidi Chapman Supkis

From: [Kermit Williams](#)
To: [ODFW Commission * ODFW](#)
Cc: [Donna Harris](#)
Subject: Hiring+new+ODFW+Director
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024 4:22:11 PM

You don't often get email from kermit.donna@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Commissioners:

I am using this short public comment period of 24 hrs. to ask that in selecting a new ODFW Director that :

(1) You provide more than 24 hrs. notice for the public to comment on such an important position replacement in the future. I would be certain that there are many Oregon Citizens who would have commented on this but were out of town , on a trip, or out of internet service as frequently happens in the area I live in.

(2) I hope you will be committed to selecting candidates that will take into account the interests of all Oregonians, and not just the traditional hunting and angling crowd. If ODFW were supported more by conservation fees that the general non- hunting public could opt into paying, I would assume that the support from this method could provide more funding to your dept. than from declining hunting permits and from Pittman Robertson fees from the sale of ammunition and other hunting supplies. The general public supports wildlife that is allowed to co-exist with us and remain alive within our state. It is ODFW's mission statement that states that you are to support our wildlife and its habitat for the enjoyment of All citizens now and in the future.

(3) You should select a group of candidates who are committed to ending the hunting and trapping of beavers, our state animal! With the threats of severe drought in our state, you must acknowledge the present science of beaver advocates that clearly show how well beavers can modify habitat that has been once degraded into a more biodiverse ecosystem by simply doing what they evolved to do...that is build dams and create wetlands. Many citizens now volunteer to create beaver analog dams which may entice the live animal back to restore habitat. Before and after photos clearly show how much beavers improve the landscape, by storing water, enhancing fish populations , and reduce destruction of riparian areas by wildfires.

(4) The senseless slaughter of wolves by ODFW and Wildlife Services brought on by the livestock industry's influence on wolf management instead of a promoting a goal of co-existence must be stopped. Since our USDA 's own data show that wolves are only responsible for less than 0.02% of cattle deaths , while respiratory and digestive tract diseases cause almost 40% of cattle deaths, these facts prove that the focus of killing wolves is completely misguided. Better animal husbandry should improve the bottom line for livestock owners. I am not only appointed for the wolf advocate position on Deschutes Co.'s Wolf Depredation Compensation Committee, where our goal is co-existence along with obtaining funding for compensation for the livestock industry where loss of livestock occurs despite non-lethal management and funding for non-lethal preventative methods, but I also volunteer for a local wolf advocacy

group whose goal is to encourage a climate of peaceful co-existence . We have held a workshop for local ranchers where we have brought in other ranchers who demonstrated how their new management focus changed to Co-existence and were successful enough that improved calf birth weights and increased reproduction of their cows occurred. Their adoption of newer stockmanship methods and low stress livestock handling also decreased wolf depredation of their livestock. It is imperative that the ODFW commission catch up with new science regarding how killing wolves indiscriminately only exacerbates depredation of livestock. Please remember that wolves are a native species whereas cattle are not.

(5) Please include candidates who really understand the consequences of climate and extinction crises. Candidates should take these threats as emergencies. Biodiversity protections must be put in place. The candidate chosen must be unafraid of this challenge.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Harris D.V.M.
Sent from my iPad

Dear Fish and Wildlife Commission Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on your director recruitment agenda item. I appreciate all the leadership of Director Melcher over the years. He was able to stabilize the budget and the Department's work and build and lead the work of competent staff and programs.

I hope you can find someone as accomplished, but who can lead the Department in new directions that recognize the urgent need to maintain fish and wildlife populations in a rapidly changing climate as well as reflect Oregon's changing demographics and its population growth.

The Department's been hamstrung, in my opinion, by its dependence on hunting and fishing license fees (around 40% of its budget), therefore giving far too much attention to the demands of hunters and fishermen when Oregonians consistently say they support more non-consumptive wildlife viewing and wild nature opportunities. Therefore, it's important to me that you look for a director who could provide leadership to diversify the funding streams and strengthen the habitat conservation mission.

Oregon's Outdoor Recreation Survey documents the changing demographics (older and more diverse) and interests of residents. <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/PRP/Documents/SCORP-2019-2023-Final.pdf> In this survey 56 outdoor recreational activities were grouped into 8 broad categories. Hunting and Fishing fell 5th out of 8 categories with 12 million user occasions while Nature Study Activities (which includes nature/wildlife/forest/wildflower observations) was 3rd in the ranking with 25 million user occasions. This result is consistent with the documented and continuing decline in hunting and fishing licenses. ODFW reported in 2022 that: When measured in proportion to the growth in the state population, participation in hunting has been on the decline in Oregon over the long term. From 2001 to 2021, the participation rate of Oregonians for hunting declined from 10.5% to 9.7%, while fishing declined from 22.1% to 15.9%. https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/docs/APPR_ODFW_2022-09-26.pdf.

The new director must also be willing to shift focus from hunting and fishing as a priority to addressing, with urgency, how best to maintain fish and wildlife populations and protect endangered species in a rapidly changing climate. Specifically, this means to me that a new director would be more grounded in the conservation world than the hunting and fishing world.

This direction shift would make it easier for the Department to reflect the public demand to stop hunting and trapping beavers on public lands so that this keystone species (that keeps water on the landscape—ever more important in a hotter drier climate-- and which is important in providing habitat for over 60 other species) could build its populations and fill all available habitat. With such a background, the new director could build a more robust habitat conservation division (that bridges and coordinates the now siloed fish and wildlife departments) and find funding that supports habitat acquisition important to fish and wildlife migration and connectivity; and this background would also mean that ODFW could be more aggressive in curtailing hatchery interference to better help our native salmon populations. (<https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2023/12/18/analysis-of-northwest-other-salmon-hatcheries-finds-nearly-all-hurt-wild-salmon-populations/>)

Thanks for the opportunity to express my hopes for the next director of ODFW.

Sincerely,

Fran Recht
POB 1344
Depoe Bay, OR 97341

From: [Jason Wisniewski](#)
To: [ODFW Commission * ODFW](#)
Subject: Director Recruitment
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024 10:48:14 PM
Attachments: [ODFW Director Recruitment Letter 01252024.pdf](#)

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ODFW Commission:

I have prepared and attached a brief letter with some thoughts and suggestions for your recruitment of the next agency director.

These suggestions were based on my 25 years of state wildlife agency experience in several states.

I wish you good luck in the candidate search and please feel free to contact me should you have any additional questions for which I may be of assistance.

--

Jason Wisniewski
President
[Fur Takers of America](#)

Phone: 931-510-9161





Jason Wisniewski, President
Fur Takers of America
(931) 510-9161
wisniewskijm@furtakersofamerica.com

January 25, 2024

Re: ODFW Director Search

ODFW Commission:

My name is Jason Wisniewski and I am the President of the Fur Takers of America. I'm providing these comments on behalf of the Fur Takers of America, a national organization representing more than 2,600 trappers from across the United States and Canada including 16 members from Oregon.

I have served as a wildlife/fisheries biologist for 3 state wildlife agencies and one university over the past 25 years which has provided me the opportunity to work under 8 agency directors during this time. Over my career, I have observed various attributes of these directors which made several extremely successful leaders in their states as well as on the national front as champions of wildlife conservation.

The first and foremost attribute of the successful directors was their understanding of the importance of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation which has been and continues to be the most successful wildlife conservation model in the world. The ability of these directors to adhere to the principles of this model ensures that they are using the best model to direct their respective agency and the resources for which they are responsible. However, it is also imperative that a director utilizes this model as wildlife management rarely follows geopolitical boundaries and management considerations will often have to be done on regional scales. Hence, failure to follow the principles of the North American Model of Wildlife Management could not only have serious consequences to wildlife management in Oregon but may also impact surrounding states in the region. I strongly recommend that the ODFW ensures that the new director be a strong supporter of this model with a deep understanding of each of its principles.

The second attribute that good agency directors have demonstrated is a deep understanding of the agency and all of the stakeholders for which it represents. Successful directors don't know everything but they know how to get the answers to the questions needing answered by reaching out their respective stakeholder groups to get all of the facts. This greatly helps the director to consider all points to weigh the benefits and consequences of decisions they must make. Having a diverse and well-balanced stakeholder list from the beginning will ensure that the director can build and maintain all of the necessary relationships for best managing the resources for the people.

Lastly, successful directors must be able to communicate effectively. Communicating effectively may be the most important attribute and will require primarily listening and then speaking. This will require listening to their staff who are the most knowledgeable experts on wildlife management in Oregon and communicating this expertise to the commission and legislators in a way that they can fully understand the benefits and consequences of actions to wildlife management, funding, personnel, etc. Likewise, they must listen to the commission and legislators to effectively communicate with their staff why



Jason Wisniewski, President
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initiatives or decisions were made. In addition, the director must be able to listen to and communicate with the public. Failure to communicate effectively will result in misunderstanding and ineffective management as well as promote rumor mills both within the agency, among politicians, and most importantly among Oregon's stakeholders. In my experience, rumor mills in agencies and among the public have been the number one culprit in ineffective leadership in agencies and more often than not result in excessive work to correct problems that never should have arisen if communications were effective.

The new director will have big shoes to fill succeeding Director Melcher who was recognized as a champion of conservation on the national scale. The new director will also have to deal with a number of recent issues which will immediately challenge them including delinquent commissioner appointments by the governor. However, I believe that finding a director with the attributes described above will help the ODFW find a candidate that can lead the agency effectively and become Oregon's next conservation champion.

Sincerely,

Jason Wisniewski, President

From: [Randy and Pamela Comeleo](#)
To: [ODFW Commission * ODFW](#)
Subject: Comments on ODFW Director Recruitment Plan
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024 11:00:05 PM

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Dear Chair Wahl and Commission members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the ODFW Director Recruitment Plan.

The biodiversity crisis requires that humans restore lost biodiversity at a scale and pace that is unprecedented.

ODFW must rapidly shift its focus from the interests of hunters and trappers and the goal of maximizing harvestable game to restoring lost biodiversity.

This restoration will require a rare kind of leadership from the new ODFW director.

During the time that Oregonians have become aware of the importance of carnivores to healthy ecosystems, a shrinking proportion of them now hunt and trap each year - only about 9.7% of the Oregon license-buying population (ages 12 to 69 years) hunt by last count, and more and more of us value ecosystem health over big numbers of game animals every year.

ODFW must find ways to adapt to this reality and develop programs to engage with the vast majority of Oregonians who value wildlife but do not hunt or fish.

In a study published in [Bioscience](#) last week, 3,589 residents from nine states were asked, "What are the most important activities in which a state wildlife agency might engage?"

The results were unambiguous. Forty-three percent of all respondents listed restoration as their top priority, followed by habitat improvement, removing invasive species, increasing land access and last, increasing hunting opportunities. People from across the political spectrum – from liberal to conservative - gave top ranking to the restoration of species. People from every age group also gave top ranking to the restoration of species. No less important - young people gave top ranking to restoration by the largest margin.

Perhaps most important, because we're talking about the priorities of our new director, was the fact that people who identified as hunters also thought restoration should be state agencies' top priority - more important than increasing opportunities to hunt and trap. Restoration was even the priority for people who identified "strongly" as hunters - these people ranked increasing hunting opportunity second, followed by habitat improvement, removing invasive species and increasing land access.

ODFW must engage with a more diverse group of constituents in order to remain a relevant, viable organization during the current biodiversity crisis.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Randy and Pam Comeleo

Co-Founders
Benton County Agriculture and Wildlife Protection Program

From: [James Rodell](#)
To: [ODFW Commission * ODFW](#)
Subject: Hiring new ODFW Director
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024 11:22:50 PM

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Commissioners:

Regarding your appointing a new Director, please know that I strongly support the recommendations expressed by Western Watersheds Project.

We need to live up to our claim to be The Beaver State. Any reduction in revenues from hunting and trapping licenses can be made up by a variety of actions:

1. License plate sales regarding the several major beneficial services that beavers provide as described by Western Watersheds.
2. Where analog placement may be more feasible than releasing beavers in a specific site, then hiring people to do that work would benefit younger Oregonians who care about our land and waters. Gainful employment can bring in tax dollars plus allow departments such as yours to observe their caliber and fill in positions working with you as they become available.

Hopefully,

James Paul Rodell
1756 NW Grant Circle
Corvallis, 97330
541-829-9002

Democracy and sentient life need our wise and caring stewardship.

From: [Jonathan Berman](#)
To: [ODFW Commission * ODFW](#)
Subject: Hiring new ODFW Director
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024 10:40:08 PM

You don't often get email from jonadayberman@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing about the Director Recruitment Plan that will guide the hiring process for the new ODFW Director. I appreciate the transparency of the Commission and opportunity for public input in the hiring process. I'd like to ask that in the future, you provide more than this 24-hour window for public engagement.

I think it's vital that the search take into consideration the priorities of all Oregonians, beyond just the fishing and hunting communities. Perhaps most importantly, candidates should be selected who understand the true seriousness of the climate crisis and its corollary, the extinction crisis. They must be able to take decisive action to protect biodiversity, which could require a broad spectrum of management interventions. The Commission should focus on candidates who understand and are committed to following the science behind mitigating the impact of climate change, including interventions addressing watershed protection, wildlife habitat preservation and expansion, and fisheries management.

Two focal issues stand out within these broader priorities. The first is the need to end the hunting and trapping of beavers. This is a critical part of any plan for maintaining and improving wildlife habitat. It's also important in water resource management and fire risk mitigation.

Secondly, the current wolf management approach, which seems to consist basically of slaughtering them, needs to end. I don't believe it is evidence-based, and it appears that a majority of Oregonians find it repugnant. There are emerging science-based approaches to carnivore management - which include coexistence practices and other more nuanced components - that candidates should be willing to embrace.

In general, candidates should be selected who will be devoted to protecting native species first and foremost, in fisheries and elsewhere.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this hiring process, which seems likely to have a major impact on the priorities and culture of ODFW for many years to come.

Jonathan Berman
Portland, Oregon

From: [Dwight Gaudet](#)
To: [ODFW Commission * ODFW](#)
Subject: Hiring new ODFW Director
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024 5:26:09 PM

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To ODFW Commission;

I appreciate the opportunity to voice my opinion and provide a bit of input into your very important work. My professional background is one composed of being a veterinary surgeon, along with becoming a successful businessman; my nearly 50 year avocation has been one of natural history and ecology.

Our society is facing a polycrisis never before imagined and your role as stewards of the Oregon's wildlife plays an integral regional role in how we navigate these treacherous waters over the coming decades. We are starting late, very late, as we begin to recognize the deep interconnection of our economic system, with - agriculture, ecology, social justice, human health, education, and even our pioneer heritage. It is critical, that we, in our various societal roles, extend ourselves to learn to take these interconnections into account, along with not just a standing in traditional scientific knowledge, but the sciences such as complexity and newest findings in the study of climate change and the correlate ecological destabilization we are being threatened with. Together with understanding more about human psychology and sociology, there is a lot on our plates.

My urging is that you search for someone not just experienced in traditional wildlife management, but someone that recognizes the current global, national, and regional impacts of the considerable threats, in number and severity, that your Department, and our society, will be called to adapt to and meet with transformative thinking - in approach and perspective.

Though the hunting and fishing community may continue to be a key thread in the Department's priorities, the extensive population of Oregonians that consider the wild places and wildlife of Oregon to be more than a bounty to be hunted, fished, or trapped, need to become more seriously listened to and accommodated in policy and priority. There needs to be a fundamental understanding of not just keystone species for a healthy wilderness community, especially the large predators, but that diversity in species populations, from forest tree/plant communities, to small mammal populations, needs also to be considered when metrics are assessed to determine the biomes health.

I particularly ask you to consider the curtailing of trapping in much of the recreational forests and lands. The miniscule number of active trappers has been awarded a grossly overweighted lobby impact in this part of the country and apart from the serious ethical and philosophical conflicts this should bring up, it will continue to have those representing your Department on their back foot before any engagement of the general public is even initiated. Between "incidental/trash/ring-off" catch, and the unsupportable dissemination of various populations - beavers, coyotes, mustelidae, along with pet injury and loss, it is long past time to be more restrictive in such archaic practices. Along with this request I urge you to provide better protection to all large predators, whether wolves, mountain lion, or bear.

I wish you the best in your attempts to do what is right, to keep up with the changes you will be facing, and especially in your learning that being a steward is not solely about decontextualized statistics and narrowly satisfying the dwindling percentage of Oregonians that are hunters and fishermen, but to represent both the populations, and the individuals, of the nonhuman world, to the best of your abilities so all - human, nonhuman, and at a more grand scale, the biosphere, may benefit.

Sincerely,

Dwight

Dwight A Gaudet, DVM,MBA,MA
65440 Tweed Rd
Bend,OR 97703
dwight.gaudet@gmail.com

From: [Todd J Weigand](mailto:toddjweigand@gmail.com)
To: [ODFW Commission * ODFW](#)
Subject: Hiring new ODFW Director
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024 5:10:50 PM

[You don't often get email from toddjweigand@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear ODFW Commission,

I was just informed about this opportunity to comment about your new director recruitment plan today. Thanks for allowing us to have this opportunity and I feel fortunate to have this opportunity to comment. I apologize for the quick message though, as it would be nice to have few days to create a more formal and informed letter.

First of all, I am from a 6th generation central/eastern oregon farming & ranching family and have been purchasing OR fishing licenses and tags since I was a young boy. Hunting licenses and tags during my young adult years. My perspective on Oregon's fish and wildlife has changed quite a lot from the time I was a boy growing up on the farm and ranch, as well as my education and personal experiences on this topic.

I highly request that the commission choose a director that will support the preservation and protection of all Oregon's native fish and wildlife, and not just the traditional use harvesters and hunting tactics of the past. We need to choose new strategies to manage our native fish and wildlife that support healthy and fully functioning ecosystems that are not just supporting harvesting quotas and senseless hunting practices. This is a great opportunity for Oregon to set an example of how to make our native fish species top priority and our adoption of top level predators in our ecosystems a norm across the state.

Beaver must be protected! Please! We can not continue to allow trapping of beaver when our riparian zones, wetlands, and water quality across the entire state has been reduced and degraded to a small fraction of it's natural levels. This is basic common sense and has been proven to help our waterways in many ways. From increasing water quality, increasing water quantity during drier periods, reduction of peak flooding flows, creating habitat for our salmonoids and many other wildlife, creating higher water tables and connectivity to the flood plane, and many, many more reasons. We only have a small fraction of historic beaver in oregon today. Let's bring them back and help improve Oregon's fish and wildlife along with many other benefits!

Creating monocultures of species in any ecosystem is not good. We need to support the most biodiverse ecosystems that we possibly can for 2024. We know that this will help resiliency in all ways. Please choose a director who is able to listen, learn, and believe in science, and that will not be pressured or influenced by the demands of old school thinking, tradition, and pressure from the industries. The native fish and wildlife of Oregon should be the top priority!

Thanks for considering my comments. I look forward to following up on this and becoming a proud supporter of the Oregon Fish & Wildlife service.

Best Regards,
Todd Weigand

Joseph, Oregon



January 26, 2024

RE: The North American Wildlife Model of Wildlife Conservation and the Selection of the New ODFW Director

Members of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Commission,

As representatives of the Oregon chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, a community deeply rooted in the ethos of conservation and responsible stewardship of our natural resources, we wish to express our views regarding the recruitment of the next Director for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). Our experience as hunters and anglers has imbued us with a profound appreciation for Oregon's rich wildlife heritage, a treasure that we, along with all Oregonians, have the privilege and duty to safeguard.

Central to our conservation efforts is the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, a principle that has ensured the survival and thriving of many of our continent's wildlife populations. This model, predicated on the Public Trust Doctrine, has long guided responsible wildlife management, ensuring that wildlife remains a shared resource, accessible and sustainable for all. It is our firm belief that the future leadership of ODFW should embody a strong commitment to these principles, integrating them with emerging strategies that benefit our wildlife and habitats.

We underscore the importance of recognizing the substantial contributions of the hunting and angling community to Oregon's wildlife management funding. According to the 2021-2023 biennium revenue report, a significant portion of ODFW's budget is derived from the sale of licenses, tags, and the participation in hunting and fishing activities. Our community's financial investments, coupled with our active involvement in conservation initiatives, exemplify a partnership model that is vital for the ongoing stewardship of our state's natural resources.

It should also be noted that the Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 496.012 outlines the state's wildlife policy, which aims to balance the conservation of indigenous species with providing recreational and aesthetic enjoyment for both current and future generations. This policy mandates the State Fish and Wildlife Commission to pursue coequal goals that ensure the maintenance of wildlife species at optimal levels, enhance wildlife production and public enjoyment through effective land and water management, and allow for equitable wildlife utilization. It emphasizes developing and maintaining public access to state lands and waters, regulating wildlife populations in harmony with land and water uses, and maximizing recreational opportunities. Furthermore, it mandates making decisions that benefit wildlife resources and consider the diverse social, economic, and recreational needs of all user groups, ensuring a sustainable and inclusive approach to wildlife management.



In the selection of a new Director for ODFW, we advocate for the following criteria to be prioritized:

Commitment to the North American Model: The ideal candidate should have an extensive understanding of and experience in applying the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, demonstrating a track record of effective wildlife management practices.

Recognition of Hunters and Anglers' Contributions: Acknowledging the pivotal role that hunters and anglers play in funding and advocating for conservation efforts in Oregon is crucial. The new Director should be dedicated to fostering this vital relationship.

Engagement with a Diverse Range of Stakeholders: Effective wildlife management requires the ability to navigate the interests of various groups, from those focused on habitat preservation to those engaged in recreational viewing. The new Director must skillfully balance these perspectives, ensuring a holistic approach to conservation that includes traditional stakeholders.

We trust that the Game Commission will weigh these considerations carefully, selecting a leader who is not only capable of navigating the challenges of modern wildlife management but also passionate about preserving Oregon's natural legacy for future generations.

We appreciate the opportunity to contribute our voice to this critical process and look forward to a future where Oregon's wildlife management reflects the shared values of conservation, respect, and scientific integrity.

Sincerely,



Ian Isaacson | Co-Chair, Oregon Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers

