



Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission Minutes

Meeting:
Friday, March 14, 2025– 8:00 AM
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Virtual Meeting
4034 Fairview Industrial Dr SE
Salem, OR 97302

1
2 *Commission minutes are considered draft until approved by the Commission.*

3
4 Notice of these meetings had been made by press release of statewide media circulation. Those
5 attending part or all the meeting included:

Mary Wahl, Chair	Debbie Colbert, Director
Becky Hatfield-Hyde, Vice Chair	Ken Loffink, Deputy Director of Administration
Bob Spelbrink, Commissioner	Sarah Reif, Acting Deputy Director of Programs
Mark Labhart, Commissioner	Nick Myatt, East Region Manager
Leslie King, Commissioner	Chris Kern, West Region Manager
Dallas Hall Defrees, Commissioner	Bernadette Graham Hudson, Wildlife Division Administrator
	Mike Harrington, Fish Division Administrator
	Jessica Watson, Habitat Division Administrator
	Michelle Tate, Executive Assistant
	Casey Thomas, Captain Oregon State Police
	Anika Marriott, Assistant Attorney General
	Erin Donald, Assistant Attorney General

7
8 **MEETING**

9
10 On Friday, **March 14, 2025, at 8:00 AM, Chair Wahl called the Oregon Fish and Wildlife**
11 **Commission** (the Commission) meeting to order.

12
13 **DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

14
15 Field Reports – in written form only; *this report is available in the meeting materials and*
16 *at*

17 [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/Field%20Report%20March%](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/Field%20Report%20March%202025.pdf)
18 [202025.pdf](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/Field%20Report%20March%202025.pdf)

19
20 Expenditure Report
21 Ken Loffink, Chief Operating Officer

22
23 Ken reported that as of January 31, 2024, the department held a total cash balance of \$133.9
24 million, with \$61 million unrestricted (including \$22 million in insurance funds from 2020
25 wildfires) and \$72.9 million restricted. Expenditures for the 2023-25 biennium are on track, with
26 60% of the budget spent, and spending is expected to remain within approved limits. For the 2025-
27 27 budget, the agency will present the Governor’s Recommended Budget (GRB) to the Joint Ways
28 and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources on March 31st and April 1st, with public

1 testimony scheduled for April 2nd, and discussions on fee adjustments, including House Bill 2342,
2 are ongoing.

3
4 *This report is available in the meeting materials and at*

5 [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/Commission%20Financial%20](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/Commission%20Financial%20Report%20March%202025.pdf)
6 [Report%20March%202025.pdf](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/Commission%20Financial%20Report%20March%202025.pdf)

8 **CLIMATE & OCEAN CHANGE POLICY REPORT**

9 An update on the ODFW Aquatic Habitat Prioritization Tool

10 Tom Stahl Deputy Inland Fish Administrator

11 Spencer Sawaske, Deputy Habitat Division Administrator and Water Program Manager

12 Courtney Zambory, Spatial Information Analyst Fish Research, Evaluation, Data, and

13 Decision Support (REDD) group

14
15 *This presentation is located in the commission material and can be viewed at*

16 [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/Presentation_Climate%20and](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/Presentation_Climate%20and%20Ocean%20Change%20Policy%20Report.pdf)
17 [%20Ocean%20Change%20Policy%20Report.pdf](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/Presentation_Climate%20and%20Ocean%20Change%20Policy%20Report.pdf)

19 **Adopt Temporary Rules**

20 The Commission ratified the following temporary rules. The six (6) temporary rules were
21 previously adopted by the director under her emergency action authority.

22
23 1.) 635-023-0101

24 Set Recreational Retention Fishery for Sturgeon in The Dalles Pool and Adjacent
25 Tributaries

26 Adopted 2/21/2025: effective 2/22/2025 through 3/31/2025.

27 This amended rule establishes two retention days for the recreational white sturgeon fishery
28 on the mainstem Columbia River in The Dalles Pool (The Dalles Dam upstream to the John
29 Day Dam) and all adjacent tributaries. Retention will be allowed on Saturday February 22
30 and Thursday February 27 in The Dalles Pool. Modification is consistent with actions taken
31 by the Departments of Fish & Wildlife for the States of Oregon and Washington at a
32 Columbia River Joint State hearing on February 19, 2025

33
34 2.) 635-023-0125

35 Set initial recreational spring salmon season in the Columbia River

36 Adopted 2/21/25: effective 3/1/2025 through 6/15/2025.

37 This amended rule sets the initial Columbia River recreational spring salmon fisheries and
38 modifies the daily bag limit for Select Area recreational salmon fisheries from March 1
39 through June 15. Modifications are consistent with actions taken by the Departments of Fish
40 and Wildlife for the States of Oregon and Washington at a Columbia River Joint State
41 hearing held on February 19, 2025.

42
43 3.) 635-041-0063

44 Allow sale of sturgeon caught in Columbia River Treaty setline fisheries

45 Adopted 2/25/2025: effective 2/26/2025 through 4/30/2025.

1 This rule is needed to authorize sales of white sturgeon caught during the Treaty setline
2 fishery in Bonneville Pool from February 26-27, 2025, and in The Dalles Pool from March
3 3-4, 2025.

4
5 4.) 635-023-0101

6 Close Recreational Sturgeon Retention in the John Day Pool and Adjacent Tributaries
7 Adopted 3/12/2025: effective 3/14/2025 through 3/31/2025.

8 This amended rule closes the recreational retention fishery for white sturgeon on the
9 mainstem Columbia River in the John Day Pool (John Day Dam upstream to the McNary
10 Dam) and all adjacent tributaries. Page 1 of 2 Modifications are consistent with actions
11 taken by the Departments of Fish & Wildlife for the States of Oregon and Washington at a
12 Columbia River Joint State hearing on March 11, 2025.

13
14 5.) 635-042-0130

15 This rule is needed to extend the non-treaty commercial gillnet fishery for smelt in the
16 Columbia River.

17 Adopted 3/12/2025: effective 3/17/2025 through 3/31/2025.

18 This amended rule will extend the 2025 non-treaty commercial smelt fishery in Zones 1-3 of
19 the lower Columbia River by adding six periods: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays
20 from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. from March 17 through March 27.

21
22 6.) 635-041-0072

23 Allow sale of warmwater species caught in Columbia River Treaty Indian Research fishery

24 Adopted 3/12/2025: effective 3/13/2025 through 9/07/2025.

25 This amended rule provides state authorization of sales of yellow perch, bass, walleye,
26 catfish, carp, and northern pikeminnow caught in a new Treaty Indian research fishery in
27 several backwater areas and sloughs of the Page 1 of 2 John Day Pool to reflect recent tribal
28 action to open this fishery.

29
30
31 Action:

32 Commissioner Spelbrink moved to ratify the Six (6) temporary rules set forth in the today's
33 agenda. Commissioner Hatfield-Hyde seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously,
34 six (6) in favor. Wahl, Hatfield-Hyde; Labhart, Spelbrink, King, Hall Defees

35 **COMMISSION UPDATES**

36 No Commission Action: Informational Only

37 Commissioner Spelbrink provided updates on the Dungeness crab fishery and whale
38 entanglement issues, requesting staff to explore options with the crab fleet to reduce risks and
39 promote opportunity for fishermen to safely set their pots at the beginning of each crab season
40 and continue conversations on options for reducing whale entanglements, including adaptive
41 management options. The Commission recognizing time constraints and workload to explore
42 options for early crab season changes to increase crabber safety.

1 **Exhibit A: COMMISSION MINUTES**

2 Action: Approval

3 Commissioner Spelbrink moved to approve the February 14, 2025, meeting minutes with
4 continued authority to correct grammar and punctuation. Commissioner King seconded the
5 motion, and the motion was carried six (6) in favor. Wahl, Hatfield-Hyde; Labhart, Spelbrink,
6 King, Hall Defees
7

8 **EXHIBIT B: REPEAL OF SILETZ CONSENT DECREE AGREEMENT**

9 The Commission repealed rules that implement the 1980 Agreement between ODFW and the
10 Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and amended rules guiding the relationship between
11 ODFW and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians to conform with federal Public Law
12 118-33 (enrolled H.R. 2839 of the 118th Congress).

13 *Commission Action: Rulemaking/Repeal*

14 Davia Palmeri, Strategic Advisor & Federal Policy Director

15
16 *Presentation:* Davia’s presentation on the Repeal of Siletz Consent Decree
17 Agreement, discussed the historical and legal background of the Siletz Tribe’s
18 relationship with the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission, focusing on the
19 repeal of the 1980 Consent Decree. Key topics included: historical context;
20 modern tribal-state relationship; legal and policy developments; and current
21 action.
22

23
24 *This presentation is located in the commission material and can be viewed at*

25 [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/EX%20B-PDF%20FILES-](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/EX%20B-PDF%20FILES-SILETZ%20TRIBE/Exhibit%20B_Presentation_Siletz%20Consent%20Decree.pdf)
26 [SILETZ%20TRIBE/Exhibit%20B_Presentation_Siletz%20Consent%20Decree.pdf](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/EX%20B-PDF%20FILES-SILETZ%20TRIBE/Exhibit%20B_Presentation_Siletz%20Consent%20Decree.pdf)
27

28 **Public Testimony**

Brian McLachlan	
Matt Alford	
Bud Lane	Siletz Tribal Member
Buddy Lane	Siletz Tribal Member
Craig Dorsey	Siletz Tribe

29
30
31 Action:

32 Commissioner Hatfield-Hyde moved to repeal OARs 635-041-0500, 635-041-0510, 635-
33 041-0515 and 635-041-0520 and amend OAR 635-800-0500 as proposed by staff.

34 Commissioner Hall Defrees seconded the motion, and the motion was carried six (6) in
35 favor. Wahl, Hatfield-Hyde; Labhart, Spelbrink, King, Hall Defees
36
37

1 **WORK SESSION: GOVERNANCE BEST PRACTICES**

2 The Commission will continue discussion from the January 10, 2025,
3 retreat related to the Commission’s roles and responsibilities and processes
4 that support a successful statewide commission.

5 *No Commission Action: Work Session Only*

6 Donna Silverberg, Donna Silverberg Consulting

7 Debbie Colbert, Director

8 **EXHIBIT C: SOUTHERN RESIDENT ORCA: LIST OF NON-LAND-OWNING STATE**
9 **AGENCIES THAT CAN PLAY A ROLE IN SRO CONSERVATION**

10 The Commission approved a list of non-land-owning state agencies that can play a role
11 in Southern Resident Orca conservation.

12 *Commission Action: Approval*

13 Howard Takata - Southern Resident Orca Conservation Coordinator

14
15 Presentation: Howard Takata provided the commission with a presentation on the
16 SRO *Non-Land-Ownning State Agencies’ Role in Southern Resident Orca*
17 *Conservation*. It covers the post-listing steps for Southern Resident Orca (SRO)
18 conservation under OAR 635-100-0160(2), focusing on the roles of various Oregon
19 state agencies that do not own or manage land. Key topics include: The
20 identification of relevant state agencies such as the Oregon Department of
21 Environmental Quality (DEQ), Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon State
22 Marine Board, and others. The criteria for agency inclusion, emphasizing programs
23 and actions that benefit SRO conservation.

24
25 *This presentation is located in the commission material and can be viewed at*
26 [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/EX%20C-](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/EX%20C-PDF%20FILES%20FOR%20WEB-ORCA/Exhibit%20C_Presentation_SRO_Non%20Land%20Owning%20Agencies.pdf)
27 [PDF%20FILES%20FOR%20WEB-](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/EX%20C-PDF%20FILES%20FOR%20WEB-ORCA/Exhibit%20C_Presentation_SRO_Non%20Land%20Owning%20Agencies.pdf)
28 [ORCA/Exhibit%20C_Presentation_SRO_Non%20Land%20Owning%20Agencies.pdf](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/EX%20C-PDF%20FILES%20FOR%20WEB-ORCA/Exhibit%20C_Presentation_SRO_Non%20Land%20Owning%20Agencies.pdf)

29
30 No Public Testimony
31 Rulemaking

32
33 Action:

34 Commissioner Spelbrink moved to determine that DEQ, DLCD, OSMB, DSL (removal-fill
35 program), and OSP can play a role in the conservation of SRO. Staff is directed to prepare,
36 on behalf of the Commission, a letter for signature by Chair Wahl to notify these agencies
37 of the Commission’s determination. Commissioner King seconded the motion, and the
38 motion was carried six (6) in favor. Wahl, Hatfield-Hyde; Labhart, Spelbrink, King, Hall
39 Defees
40

41 **EXHIBIT D: OREGON CONSERVATION & RECREATION FUND (OCRF) PROJECT**
42 **FUNDING**

43 The Commission approved projects from the Fall 2024 OCRF Grant Solicitation

44 *Commission Action: Approval*

45 Reva Gilman, OCRF Grant Coordinator

1 Jessica Watson, Acting Habitat Division Administrator
2 Reva provided an overview of recommended projects for funding approval. It highlights 17
3 proposed projects with a total expenditure of \$1,027,519. Among these, 12 projects focus
4 on addressing drought-related issues, while 5 are non-drought projects. Key projects
5 include the Madrone Ridge Project, monitoring at-risk amphibians in floodplain systems,
6 the *Bring It Outside: Wonders of our Watershed* initiative, and enhancing river access
7 through *Adventures Without Limits*
8

9 *This presentation is located in the commission material and can be viewed at*
10 [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/EX%20D/Exhibit%20D_Pres](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/EX%20D/Exhibit%20D_Presentation_OCRF%20Project%20Approval.pdf)
11 [entation_OCRF%20Project%20Approval.pdf](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/25/03_Mar/EX%20D/Exhibit%20D_Presentation_OCRF%20Project%20Approval.pdf)
12

13 No Public Testimony
14

15 Action:

16 Commissioner King moved to approve the 17 projects recommended for funding by the Oregon
17 Conservation and Recreation Advisory Committee as described in Attachment 2. Commissioner
18 Hall Defrees seconded the motion, and the motion was carried six (6) in favor. Wahl, Hatfield-
19 Hyde; Labhart, Spelbrink, King, Hall Defees
20

21 **EXHIBIT E: ACCESS & HABITAT PROJECT FUNDING**

22 The Commission approved the Access and Habitat Board recommendations for project
23 funding.

24 *Commission Action: Approval*

25 Travis Schultz, Access and Habitat Program Coordinator
26

27 Travis Schultz, Access & Habitat Coordinator outlined recommended projects for A&H
28 enforcement, including: OSP Enforcement Project (2025-2027; Linn County Forest Deputy,
29 with enforcement by a Linn County Sheriff Deputy.
30

31 *This presentation is in the commission material and can be viewed at LINK*

32 No Public Testimony
33

34 Action:

35 Commissioner Hatfield-Hyde moved to approve the two projects recommended for funding
36 by the Access & Habitat Board. Commissioner Spelbrink seconded the motion, and the
37 motion was carried six (6) in favor. Wahl, Hatfield-Hyde; Labhart, Spelbrink, King, Hall
38 Defees
39

40 **DIRECTOR'S REPORT CONTINUED: STATE WILDLIFE ACTION** 41 **PLAN (SWAP) REVISION UPDATE**

42 *No Commission Action: Informational Only*

43 Bernadette Graham Hudson, Wildlife Division Administrator.

44 Carolyn Eckrich, State Wildlife Action Plan Revision

45 Coordinator

46 Emily VanWyk Acting Conservation Strategy Coordinator

1
2 The Commission was provided an overview of Oregon’s State Wildlife Action Plan
3 (SWAP) 10-year revision. It highlights the global and state-level risks to species,
4 emphasizing that 1 in 4 species are at risk. The revision aims to maintain and restore
5 habitats, prevent species decline, and reduce future federal and state Endangered
6 Species Act (ESA) listings through a proactive and voluntary approach.
7 Key updates include addition and removal of Species of Greatest Conservation Need
8 (SGCN); revised threats, conservation actions, and habitat analyses; enhanced
9 integration of climate change and pollution data; and new tools and resources for
10 private landowners, educators, and urban conservation.

11
12 The plan outlines upcoming steps, including technical reviews, habitat and species
13 meetings in March, and public outreach through virtual open houses, listening events,
14 and media engagement. Final commission approval is expected in August.

15
16 **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

17 The Commission met in Executive Session; this Executive Session is held pursuant to
18 ORS 192.660 (2)(f) to consider information or records that are exempt by law from
19 public inspection, as well as to consult with legal counsel concerning legal rights and
20 duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed as
21 authorized by ORS 192.660 (2)(h).

22
23
24 Chair Wahl adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.