



## **Maintain Restoration & Enhancement Program and Columbia River Basin Endorsement Fund 2019 Legislative Session**

### **Senate Bill 42**

#### **Background:**

The Restoration and Enhancement (R&E) Program was established in 1989 to fund projects to improve fisheries, maintain hatcheries and provide access and opportunity for Oregon fishers. The Program has been reauthorized in 1991, 1997, 2003, and 2009, and will currently sunset December 31, 2019.

In the governing statute (ORS 496.289) there is a requirement that the R&E Board meet and report to the Fish and Wildlife Commission every 120 days. This requirement is an unnecessary burden on the Board that results in an odd arrangement of meetings that do not align well with Fish and Wildlife Commission schedules, budget cycles, construction timelines, or Board travel schedules. Additionally, due to changes in the commercial fishing industry since the inception of this program, it has become more difficult to successfully fill all three categories of commercial representatives as required in ORS 496.286. To allow for more flexibility there is a need to clarify that representation by all three categories is preferred but not required.

Columbia River Basin Endorsement (CRBE) fee and Columbia River Fisheries Enhancement Fund were established in 2013 to provide funding to implement measures that enhance fisheries, optimize the economic benefits of fisheries and advance native fish conservation related to Columbia River fish management and reform. Per ORS 508.980 the fee and the fund will sunset January 2, 2022. This program has been implemented as scheduled, and continued funding will be needed to maintain production of fish for harvest by commercial and recreational anglers, and to monitor the return rates and harvest levels of salmonid species in the Columbia River.

#### **What the Concept Does:**

Removes the sunset date for the Restoration and Enhancement Program, to allow for legislative review on an as needed basis. Removes the requirement the Restoration and Enhancement Board meet every 120 days, and broadens the requirements for representation on the Board to more general commercial interests.

The concept also removes the sunset date from the Columbia River Endorsement Fund, maintaining the fee on recreational licenses to fish for salmon, steelhead and sturgeon in the Columbia River and its tributaries to pay for hatchery production and monitoring of fisheries.

#### **Fiscal Impact:**

No fiscal impact anticipated by removing the sunset date on the Restoration and Enhancement Program, or from modifying requirements for timing of Board meetings or Board membership.

Continuing the Columbia River Basin Endorsement Fee will provide funding for production of fish for harvest, and monitoring fisheries to assess performance, ensure ESA compliance, and inform season management decisions.

# COLUMBIA RIVER FISHERIES REFORM FUNDING

## How the money is spent & what's the plan for the future?

Here's how the money is spent over the past two biennia, along with plans for future spending. Fund types are broken out into two categories: 1) general fund and 2) Columbia Basin Endorsement.



### Commercial Enhanced Off-Channel

Increase off-channel area hatchery releases, evaluate/implement expanded commercial use (both time and area) of existing off-channel sites, evaluate the potential of additional off-channel sites. (Not all activities occurred in all years).



### Commercial Monitoring & Eval

Increased sampling of landed and non-landed commercial catch for both existing and potential fishing gears, real-time observation of non-landed catch in commercial fisheries, and research into post-release mortality rates of non-landed catch in commercial fisheries. (Not all activities occurred in all years). Additional evaluation and testing of alternative gears was funded using a combination of Federal and Commercial Fish funds.



### Recreational Monitoring & Eval

Improve sampling and estimation methods for recreational catch, install boat ramp cameras for angler effort counts, increase robustness of existing Willamette and Columbia River creel surveys, implement new angler creel program upstream of Bonneville Dam to ensure fishery coverage under the Endangered Species Act. (Not all activities occurred in all years)



### White Sturgeon Assessments

Improve precision and accuracy of white sturgeon stock assessments. Increased tagging efforts and new methodologies have improved population dynamics information, allowing for reopening of sturgeon retention fisheries and improved long-term monitoring of population.



### Adaptive Management Changes

Further increases in hatchery production for off-channel fisheries. Operations support for Leaburg Hatchery.

