

# ODFW HATCHERY ASSESSMENT

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS: SURVEY

JANUARY 2025

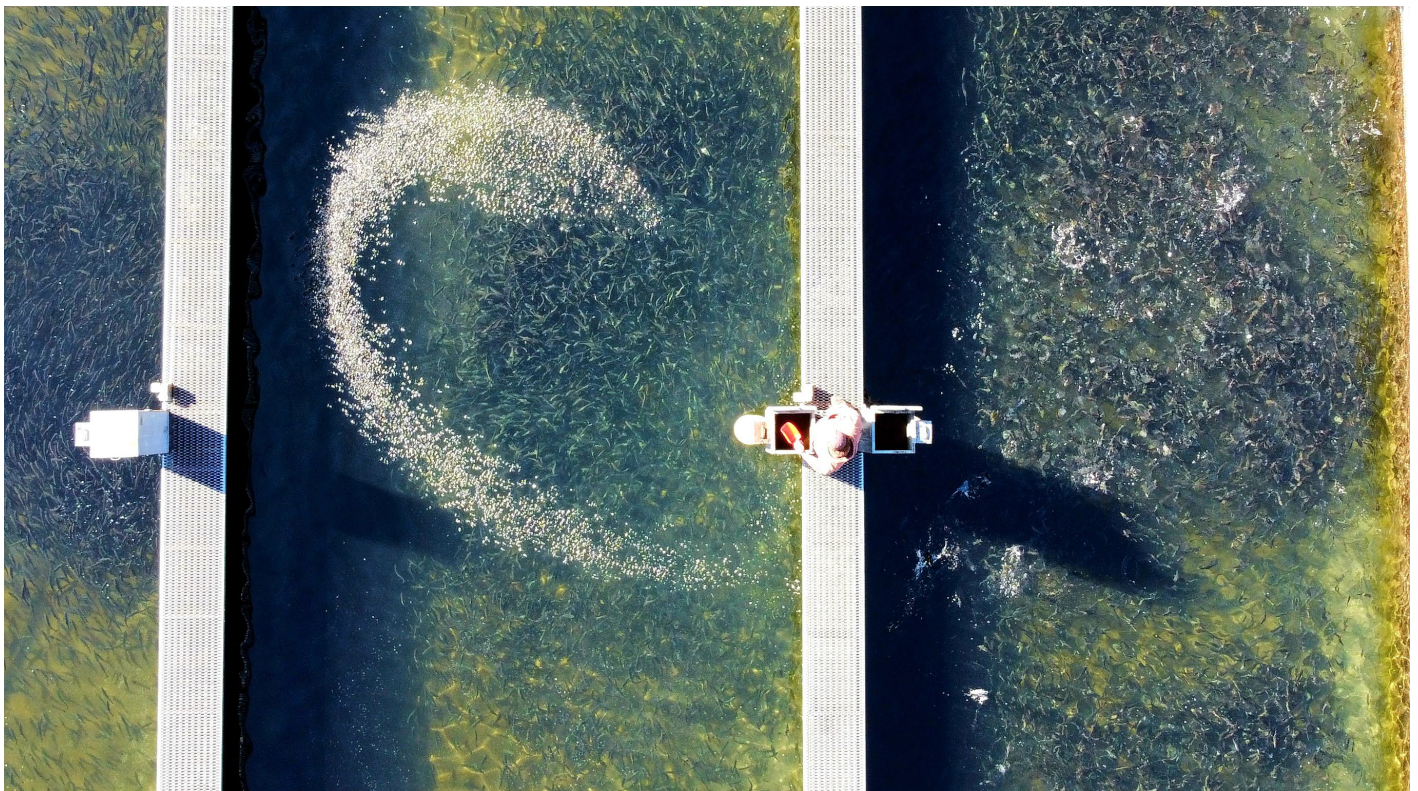


### SURVEY ANALYSES

The survey was designed to ask questions related to the information and context presented at the third large group meeting, specifically the factors the small group created. For this reason, participants were also asked about their engagement with the hatchery assessment process. The survey received 2,082 unique responses (duplicate responses were merged into one response per person and email address). The analyses are separated by quantitative and qualitative questions, with the factor ranking represented in multiple formats based on participants' geographic location and fishing response data.

### SURVEY QUESTIONS

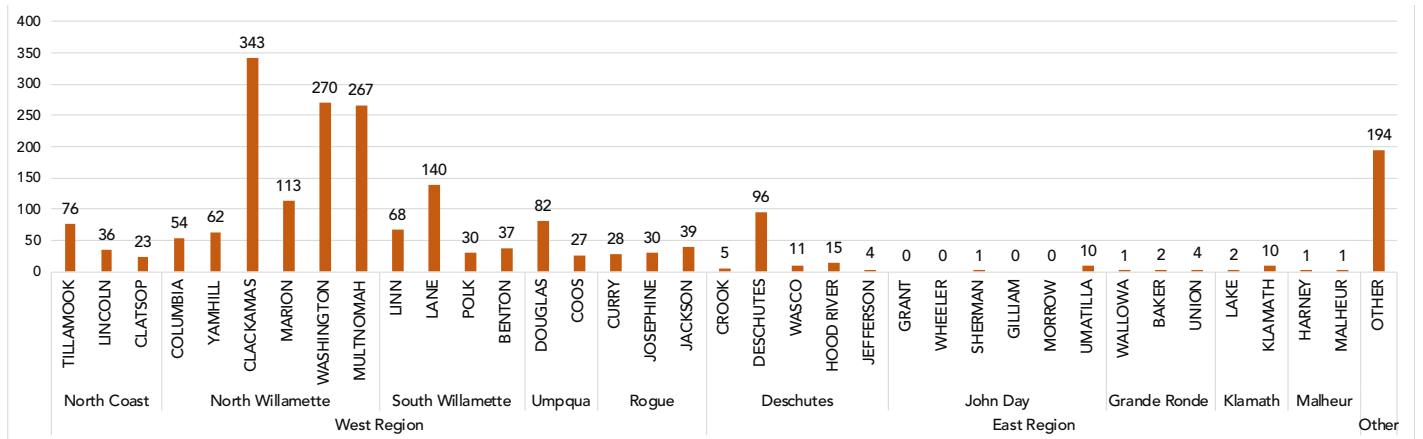
1. Name
2. Email Address
3. Are you an Oregon resident?
4. What is your zip code?
5. Did you fish recreationally in Oregon anytime in the last year?
6. Which of the following sources have you used to learn about ODFW's hatchery assessment?
7. Please rank the 5 factors below in order of importance when prioritizing investment in ODFW fish hatcheries (1 is most important and 5 is least important). ODFW should invest in Oregon's hatcheries to: (rank)
  - Minimize the costs of running the hatchery system
  - Maximize hatchery program performance (e.g. prioritize stocks and release strategies that maximize harvest)
  - Maximize the community value of the hatchery system (maximize economic, cultural, educational benefits)
  - Maximize positive outcomes for wild fish
  - Maximize environmental resiliency of the hatchery system (minimize risks from increasing water temperatures, wildfire, and flooding)
8. List any other factors you think are important when prioritizing investment in ODFW fish hatcheries.
9. What else would you like to say about investment in ODFW fish hatcheries?



## QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

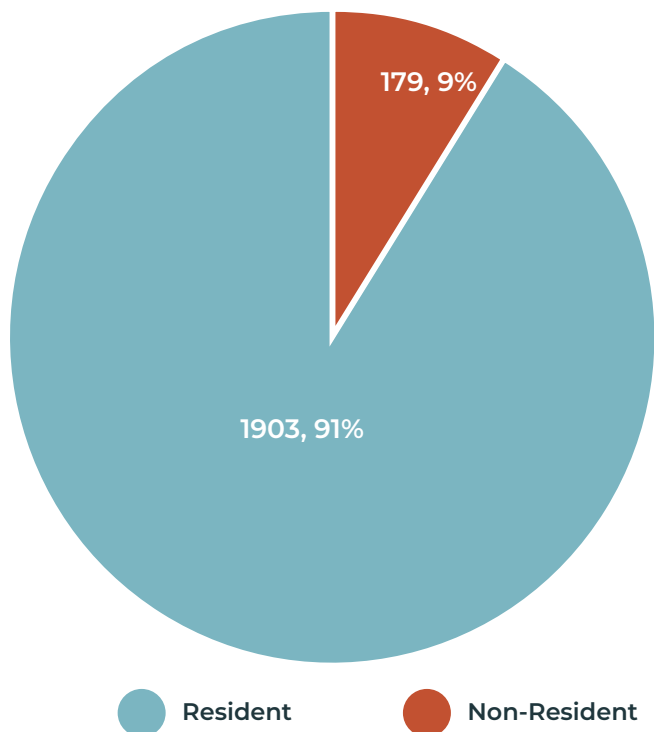
As shown in the following graphs, a high proportion of survey respondents were Oregon residents and had fished in Oregon in the past year. Factor rankings were similar for respondents from urban and rural zip codes in Oregon, as well as non-residents. In all three cases, hatchery program performance generally ranked high, hatchery system costs generally ranked low, and other factors were intermediate. Differences in factor ranking were more apparent when comparing responses based on fishing participation, particularly in the ranking for maximizing positive outcomes for wild fish.

### Oregon Hatchery Survey Responses by County

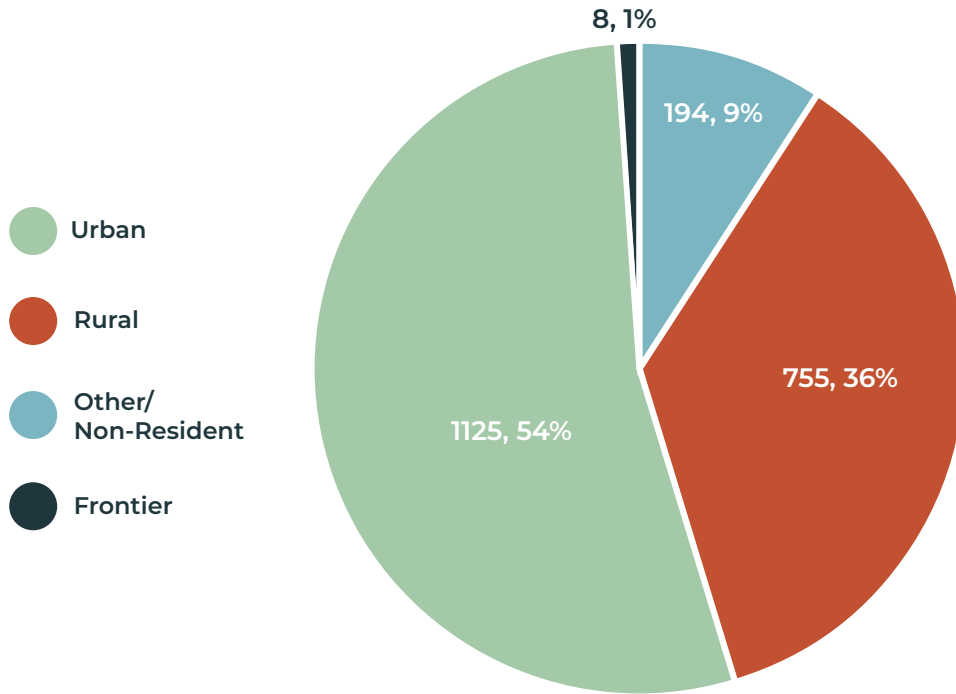


**NOTE:** "Other" category in the Survey Responses by County graph contains responses from people who input an invalid zip code, and responses from non-residents.

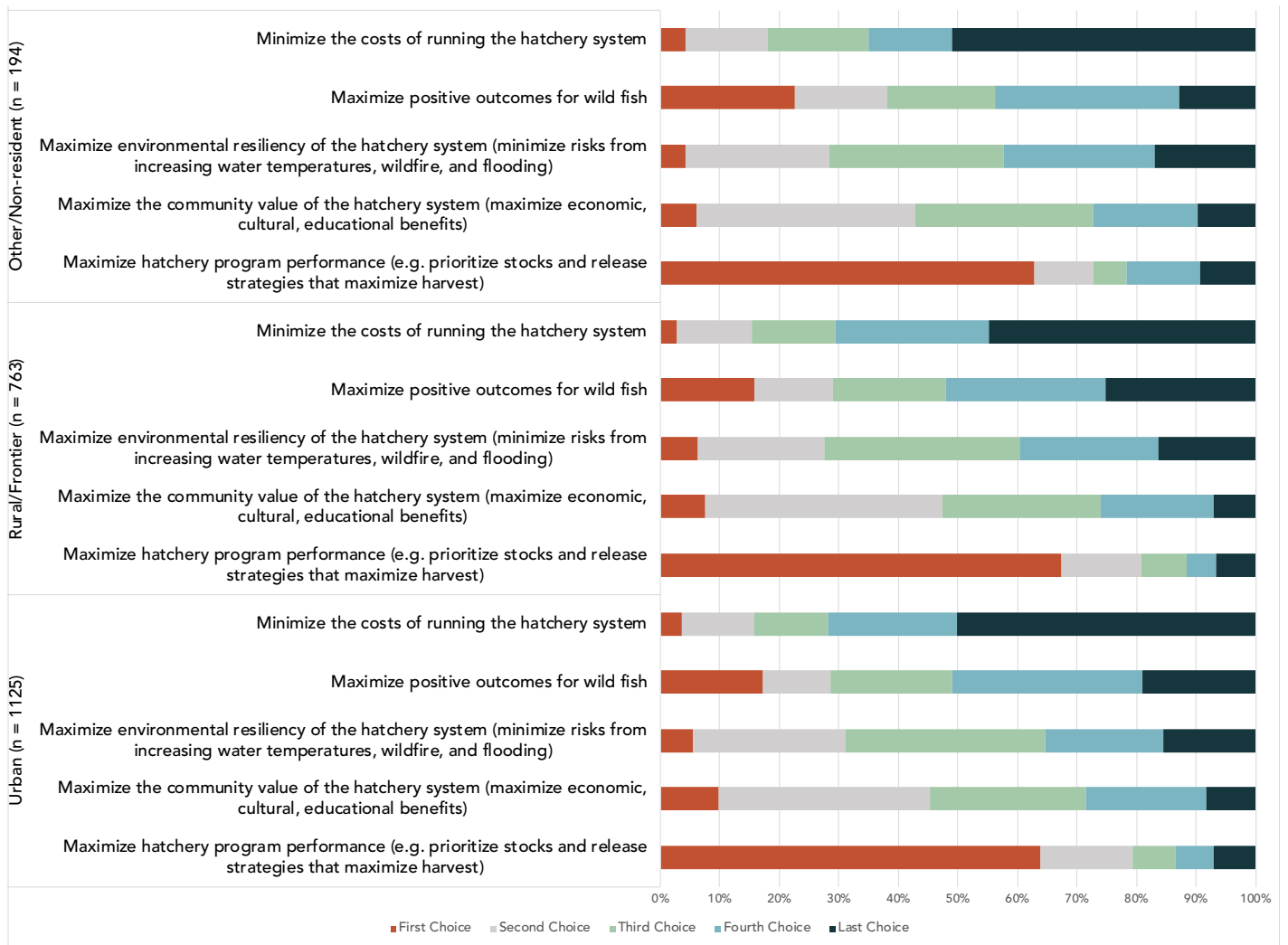
### Hatchery Survey Respondents by Oregon Residency



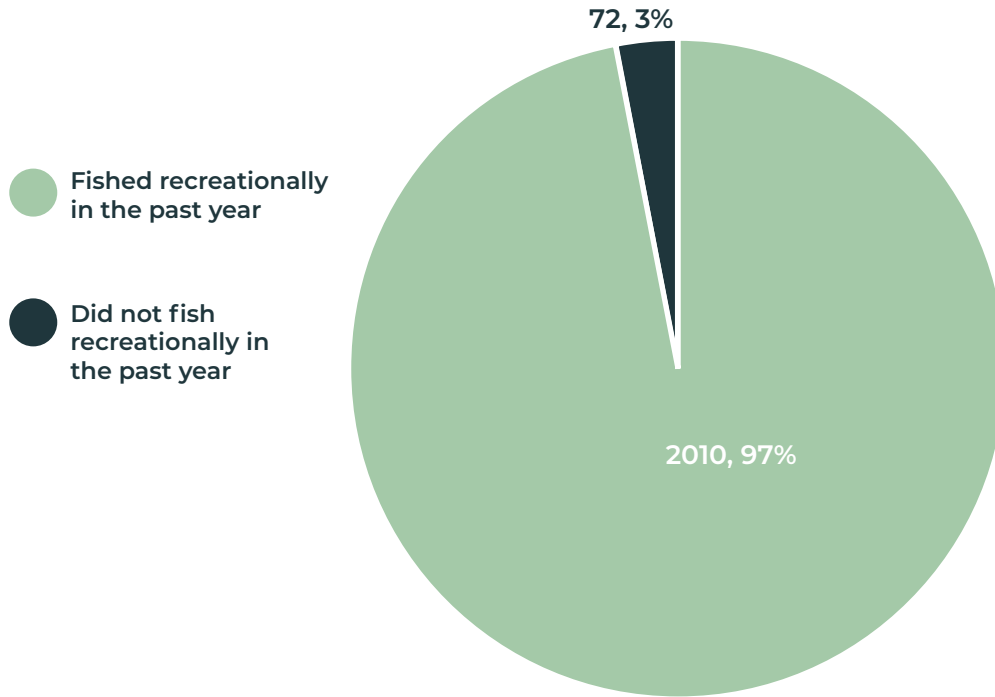
## Hatchery Survey Respondents by Zip Code Designation



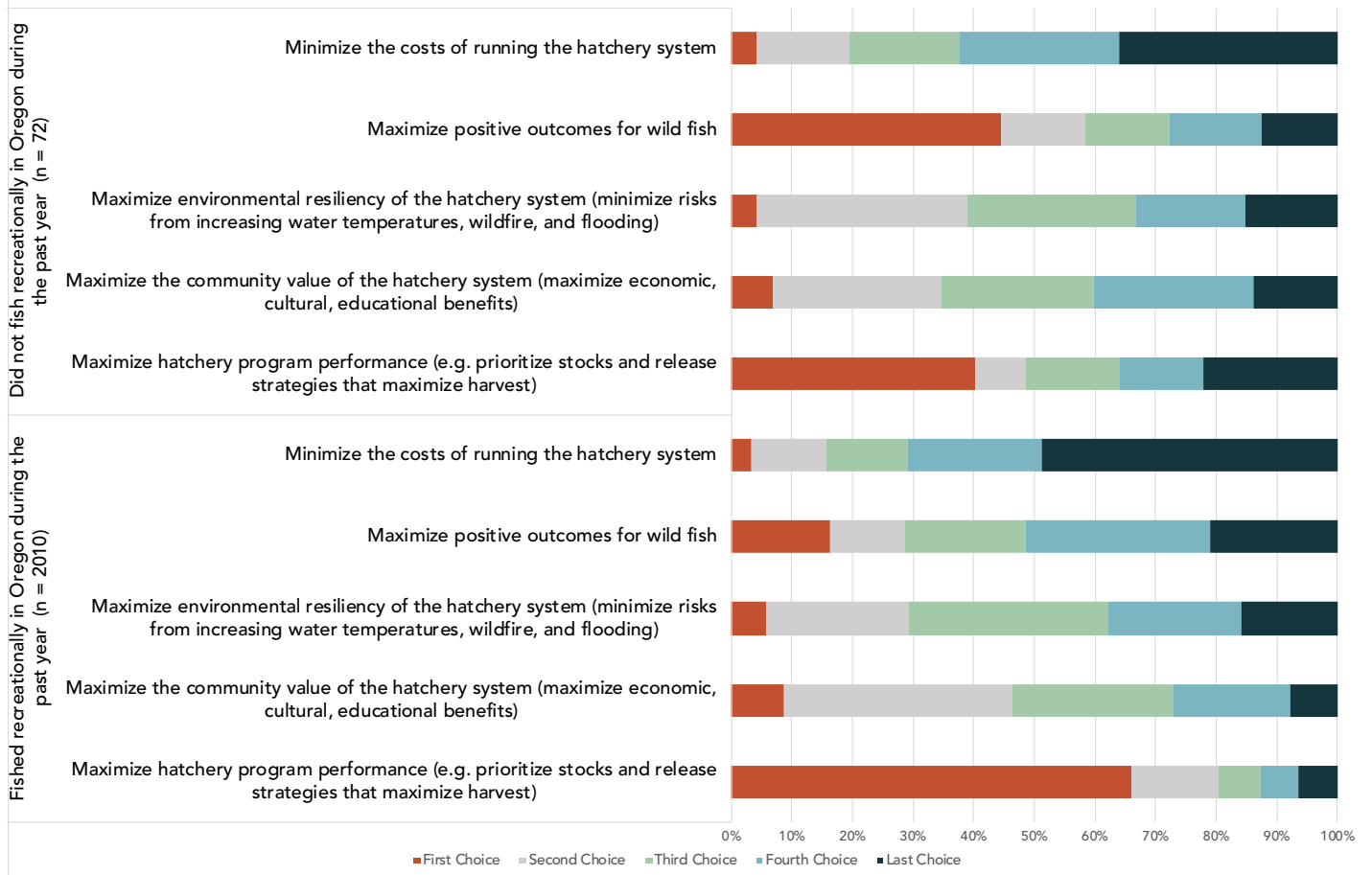
## Hatchery Priority Rankings by Zipcode Designation



## Hatchery Survey Respondents by Angling Participation



## Hatchery Priority Rankings by Angling Participation



## QUALITATIVE RESULTS

There were two open-ended questions in the survey:

8. List any other factors you think are important when prioritizing investment in ODFW fish hatcheries.
9. What else would you like to say about investment in ODFW fish hatcheries?

Over 1,500 respondents answered one or both questions, resulting in about 1,300 individual responses to each question. Many of the responses could apply equally well to either question in the survey, so all responses were reviewed together to develop the following summary. The Department did not attempt to quantify responses to the open-ended questions. Instead, it provided quotes that are representative of themes expressed in survey responses, often by many respondents:

*“Invest in the future. Modernize and maximum production value of all Salmon and Steelhead hatcheries. Anglers add a tremendous financial benefit to rural Oregon. Those parts of the state deserve to have more value placed upon them.”*

*“Being able to harvest fish is an important part of our family and Oregon way of life. Hatcheries make this possible and should be funded so they can make that possible.”*

*“I believe the focus needs to shift heavily to protecting and supporting wild fish, not hatchery fish.”*

*“Consider the cultural benefits of strong recreational fisheries. One good example based on my own personal experience is getting kids hooked on fishing instead of drugs, cell phones and video games!”*

*“Continue to honor and support tribal cultural and economic needs.”*

*“Wild fisheries and habitat restoration to support them should be the number one priority. Hatcheries should support that mission by focusing on restoring wild fish runs where necessary, not function as a ‘put and take’ commercial/recreational harvest.”*

*“Hatchery fish are expensive, have an extremely low return on investment & are far less adaptable (than wild fish) to negative impacts of climate change.”*

*“The hatchery fish provide an incredible outcome for all. It provides great fishing, economic boost for all industries, hotels, restaurants, service stations, increased sales for fishing licenses etc...”*

*“It is difficult to lump all streams and all hatcheries into one bucket. Hatchery priorities should be unique for each one based on the state of a given river’s run, habitat, and current fish populations. For sure, if we’re going to use hatcheries, wild broodstock should be used whenever possible.”*

*“The hatcheries are extremely important to help replace the fish stocks that have been destroyed by dams, destruction of spawning habitat and urbanization of watersheds.”*

*“Overall, hatcheries have been a poor investment for Oregon anglers. They have not maintained abundant fish stocks nor have they adequately mitigated declining numbers of fish due to stream blockages, forestry and agricultural practices, and infrastructure development. The money spent on hatcheries should be re-invested in habitat restoration, improved fish passage, and wild fish production.”*

*“ODFW should look for public-private partnerships to help reduce the cost of maintaining and operating hatcheries.”*

*“Decrease regulations to allow for more tribes and private entities to operate hatcheries.”*

*“We are not the only species that benefit from ODFW fish hatcheries. Sea Lions, Orcas, many bird species, and more all benefit from having an increased and supplemented population of Salmon and Steelhead. If we stop production of hatchery raised fish, a vital food source for many other species will be reduced significantly. We need to focus on improving spawning habitat and rearing habitat to improve wild fish performance while also maintaining a healthy population of hatchery fish to supplement the food source for all the species that rely on salmonids.”*

*"Maximize reducing fish predators ie: sea lions, seals and cormorants. It is obvious that sea lions and walleye are the main beneficiary of our investments in fish and not people."*

*"Too many of our fish are getting killed by trawlers and sea lions before they have a chance to return. I think maximizing output should be prioritized since there hasn't been any attempts to mitigate those issues."*

*"Increase/maximize volunteer opportunities. Throughout Oregon there are individuals and groups ready to volunteer significant time and effort to maintaining and operating hatcheries. There are several examples where groups are currently successfully running hatcheries and maintaining related facilities. Angler capture broodstock programs are popular and provide significant benefits. The angling public is ready to roll up their sleeves and help, they just need the opportunity."*

*"Decisions should be made based on scientific data and not from undue pressure from any group."*

*"There are no real 'wild' fish anymore. Focus should be on creating the optimal conditions for continuing harvest and runs."*

*"Maintain current levels and control of trout production. We are primarily a trout fishing state and cannot lose sight of that. While I love fishing for anadromous fish, the tail should not wag the dog, and trout production should have the highest priority."*

*"I would like to see Kokanee planted in more lakes to expand Kokanee fishing opportunities."*

*"Oregon must also hold the federal government accountable for meeting its obligations to fund hatchery mitigation in the Willamette Valley and beyond, including at hatcheries operated by ODFW"*

*"Strong consideration should given to "carrying capacity" of oceans and rivers. This includes due consideration to hatchery releases from all sources....national and international."*

*"I am a disabled fisherman. I only have so many places or opportunities to fish. Please keep the hatchery system in place."*

*"I'd happily pay extra for my Tags for larger runs. Cancel the Columbia river endorsement and put that money into the hatcheries. Take commercial gill nets off the Columbia river."*

*"I believe that we need to let anglers have a larger say in what goes on in our fisheries. Most of the time we are the ones who know the rivers and fisheries better than anyone. I wish we could better co exist with the biologists and ODFW better."*

*"For what we pay for license tags and fees. The State agencies should be investing alot more funding into hatcheries."*

*"Increase hatchery production across the board!"*

*"Too much money and time is invested in promoting opportunities for fish harvests; by decreasing emphasis on harvesting fish, we can better improve sustaining healthy fish populations"*

*"Increase volunteer programs, like STEP. Install hatch boxes run by volunteers in more upstream tributaries."*

*"Think about our future generations and how we can excite them about/involve them in fishing activities!!!"*

In addition to the general themes represented above, many responses identified a need to improve fishing in a specific river system (e.g. Clackamas, Sandy, and others) or concerns about a specific hatchery (e.g. Nehalem Hatchery, Rock Creek Hatchery, Salmon River Hatchery, Elk River Hatchery, Cole Rivers Hatchery, Eagle Creek National Fish Hatchery, and others). Comments about specific hatcheries included concerns about potential closure, hatchery performance, and potential environmental impacts.