



# Fish Restoration & Enhancement Program Board Meeting Minutes

**Date:** September 22, 2022

**Location:** Best Western Agate Beach  
Cove Room

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## Fish Restoration & Enhancement Program (R&E) Board Members

Board Member	Board Member
Dave Grosjacques – Representing Recreational Fisheries	Ray Monroe – Representing Commercial Troll Fisheries
Rich Heap – Representing Recreational Fisheries	Kay Brown – Representing the Public
Cary Johnson – Representing Gillnet Fisheries	Susan Chambers - Representing Fish Processing Industry
Yancy Lind – Representing Recreational Fisheries	

**Members Absent:** Y. Lind; S. Chambers joined meeting at emergency grants section.

### Call to Order & Introductions

Chair R. Heap called the meeting to order.

M. Gauvin gave an agency update to the group. New habitat division is being organized.

Board discussed the future indexing of the R&E fee that funds R&E program. Currently \$4 on every license sold, but it hasn't been changing when license fees increase. License sales increased during COVID but seems to have leveled off.

R. Heap asked if there was any talk about a saltwater endorsement for Oregon anglers – would like to get a measurement of how much value is derived from the recreational ocean fishing effort. These figures would help show how much economic value recreational ocean fisheries have. The saltwater endorsement could help you know the total number of anglers that go to the ocean. There was some discussion about how these numbers are already estimated.

### Meeting Agenda Approval

The Board reviewed the proposed meeting agenda.

Motion: D. Grosjacques motioned to approve, K. Brown seconded. Motion approved 5-0.

### Approval of Meeting Minutes

The Board reviewed the March meeting minutes. A note was added that the subcommittee didn't meet to discuss IJA/RAWA funding. M. Gauvin gave an update on IJA/RAWA.

Motion: K. Brown motioned to approve the March meeting minutes with note that the subcommittee did not meet. The motion was seconded by D. Grosjacques and approved 5-0.

### **Budget Update**

M. Olson gave an update on the budget. There was an error in the paragraph text not matching the figures in the table. Return funds were shown as zero in the table, however, without completion reports from projects, we wanted to be conservative in our calculations to ensure we don't go over budget.

C. Johnson asked if we would be going over our limitation by funding everything today. M. Olson explained that yes, that would be the case, but that we have two projects with budget changes that will allow the funding of all projects without exceeding limitation. The changes will occur in the Hatchery Project Bundle and the Quillback Rockfish Survey Equipment projects.

R. Monroe asked if in the past we've funded projects on the condition that there are enough return funds. R. Heap responded in the affirmative.

### **Emergency Requests and Modifications**

#### **Emergency Request**

St Louis Ponds temporary pump. R. Heap asked where the money would come from if board said denied the request. K. Brown asked if this would change the ask that we are looking at later in the day. M. Olson explained that it would not, this is for the stop gap pump that has been keeping the ponds full over the summer while they submitted a grant application for project funding to put in a new permanent pump. M. Olson gave an update on the emergency funds account. K. Brown voiced her support for the emergency request.

K. Brown motion to approve, D. Grosjacques seconded. Motion was carried unanimously.

#### **Emergency Requests under \$5k approved internally**

North Fork Schooner Creek brood collection site had a landslide that took out a foot bridge. It was pushed off the footing that it rested on. The district hired an excavator to move the bridge back into place.

Taylor Lake aeration system. Wildfire took out the building housing compressors and controls for the aeration system. They were short by \$1,100 from the insurance claim to get everything back up and running.

### **Project Proposal Review & Recommendations**

The Board reviewed the following project proposals.

K. Brown asked for an update on our current R – E funding split, M. Olson gave an overview before voting on these projects began.

#### **21-032 R&E Construction Equipment**

Bryce Hansen (RE Construction Project Manager) gave an overview of the project and how the equipment would save the R&E Program money due to reduced need to rent expensive equipment. Bryce explained that R&E staff and those who have gone through training with Bryce would be the only individuals authorized to operate the equipment. S. Chambers asked about situations where R&E had two projects going on at once, Bryce explained that he is at each project site so it would go with him from site to site. K. Brown asked where it would be stored, Bryce responded that it would be stored at EE Wilson, outside, but that there are plans to construct a building for storage in the future. R. Monroe voiced his support for the project citing past experiences with huge rental costs of sitting equipment. \$1200-1300 per day. D. Grosjacques voiced his support for this project saying that Bryce always finds ways to save the program money. D. Grosjacques reminded us that it would get an R&E sticker on it. R. Heap voiced support for this project saying bobcats are extremely versatile. K. Brown asked why there was no commercial benefit and other species listed – Bryce said he went with what he knew for sure it would benefit.

Motion: D. Grosjacques motioned to pass, C. Johnson seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

### **21-033 Hatchery Project Bundle**

Scott Patterson (Hatchery Program Manager) gave an update on the project because of changes to it since submission. Clackamas pipeline will not happen this biennium due to FERC licensing related to Hydro and moving pipeline in berm. Salmon River had crumbling pipes that have been partially repaired, but during those repairs more damaged pipe was discovered. Truck delivery could occur by May-June next year if ordered right away. Budget adjustments would drop ask to \$358,000.

R. Heap voiced his preference for the bundling of hatchery projects. R. Heap explained that these hatchery bundles are a much better way to ask for money than several separate asks because the hatcheries get to prioritize their needs for the board. R. Heap said that the hatchery coordinator is a much better judge of the prioritization. R. Heap asked about the Rock Creek Hatchery, Scott Patterson responded that he will be discussing the Rock Creek Hatchery in the 23-25 hatchery bundle preview later in the meeting.

Motion: C. Johnson motioned to approve the project with the new amount of \$358,000. D. Grosjacques seconded and the motion was carried unanimously.

### **21-034 Wallowa River Fishery Evaluation Phase - 1**

Kyle Bratcher (District Biologist) gave an overview of the project. Project investigates abundance, survival from year to year, seasonal movement, catch rates, etc. K. Brown asked about a section of the application that ended mid-sentence. M. Olson pointed out that there is a limit on word count for different sections of the application. Kyle explained that the Wallowa Lake dam rebuild is in the legislature. There was an MOA that provides for instream flows for the fish during the summer months. K. Brown asked why R&E is being asked for this and not the district. Kyle answered that he doesn't get any money for these kinds of things. The district budget pays for three staff for the whole district and then they must hunt for money for any research they want to do.

Motion: R. Monroe motioned to approve the project. C. Johnson seconded. C. Johnson said that of all the projects being considered, this would be his lowest ranking despite him still scoring it highly. All but R. Heap agreed. R. Heap said he would rank it higher because of existing equipment being in place. Motion was carried unanimously.

### **21-035 Quillback Rockfish Survey Equipment**

Scott Marion (Marine Habitat Project Leader) gave an overview of the project and the uses for the requested equipment. Quillback rockfish retention was prohibited after the last stock evaluation. Video assessment is the best way to do these stock assessments because the hook and line sampling methods have multiple biases, one of which is size. Retention of quillback rockfish won't be able to resume without better stock assessments. Scott explained that monitoring with oceanographic equipment is important because there are effects of ocean acidification and hypoxic conditions that we need to look at in relation to the rockfish. There was a reduction in the ask of R&E funds because a request for Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission funding was recently approved. The current ask would be \$59,000, down from \$98,100.

K. Brown asked if Scott would be coming back to ask for replacement Remote Operated Vehicle. Scott said potentially. Scott explained that the cost is about \$350k for the base model but it takes at least a year to get so it would have to be requested at the beginning of a biennium. However, replacing the ROV has been identified by the agency as a priority and there has been talk of using RAWA funding to purchase it when it comes through. Scott touched again on the fact that we cannot open retention back up on quillback rockfish without the data that this requested tracking system will allow the existing ROV to continue collecting. C. Johnson asked if the tracking system in the ask would be compatible with existing equipment. Scott responded that it would be and that it would also work with a smaller nearshore ROV which can fill in some data gaps where the larger ROV cannot survey. C. Johnson asked if past quillback data from previous R&E funding was used, Scott said yes it was used in the last stock assessment. It was the only data referenced. The scarcity and unknown nature of the quillback rockfish stock can impact the ability to fish for other species, limiting angler opportunities. R. Heap voiced that

there are some people who are hesitant to keep rockfish because of fear of misidentification and penalty. Rockfish fills in for salmon fishing when returns are bad, and guides have said it is hard to sell anything less than a 4 rockfish per person trip. The board discussed that as some species are perceived as scarce, regulations will lower overall bag limits, making it harder for guides to sell trips. S. Chambers voiced that this project seems important and is forward thinking and a good example of good management practice.

Motion: S. Chambers motioned to approve the project with a new budget of \$59,000. K. Brown seconded and the motion was carried unanimously.

### **21-036 St Louis Fishing Ponds Pump Replacement**

Mac Barr (District Biologist) gave an overview of the project. He explained how popular this site is with a large and diverse group of anglers. He also explained how important the pump is to maintain the pond levels during the summer and fall – water temperatures, aeration, fish health, etc. This project is asking for \$150,000. S. Chambers asked when the status of OCRF funding would be known. Mac answered mid-December. R. Heap asked how deep the well is. Mac responded about 350'. This is part of the reason the removal of the old pump and installation of the temporary pump was so expensive. The tail shaft broke while removing the old pump. M. Gauvin also added that the old pump had no Variable Frequency Device (VFD), so it was all on or all off and very expensive electrically. The new pump will be much more efficient and save on power. C. Johnson asked why the pump is so expensive. Mac answered that it is because it is a 75hp pump and the control device is nearly half of the cost.

Motion: K. Brown motioned to approve the project, D. Grosjacques seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

### **Preview of 23-25 Priority Bundles**

#### Hatchery bundle

- Klamath and Rock Creek hatcheries haven't been rebuilt yet.
- ODFW is currently working with the State's insurance to determine coverage.
  - Assessment is done for Klamath hatchery if they stay within the footprint that was previously in use to avoid damaging anything in the area.
  - More fire-resistant materials will be used, like metal roofs and brick instead of wood. FEMA mitigation will likely supply 90% of the missing funds and will likely be asking R&E for 10%.
  - Rock Creek –Scott Patterson gave an update on the Rock Creek hatchery. Public meetings are underway and there are a few options being considered.
- Scott also discussed weir replacement at Salmon River and raceway repairs at Nehalem.
- Scott was asked to come up with plan for coastal hatcheries that are losing flows in the face of climate change. Recirculation systems are one of the ways to mitigate the lower flows.

#### 23-25 biennium ODFW Fishing facilities bundles

- M. Gauvin gave an update on Reservoir Dogs Prioritization.
- Projects were split into two categories. First is boating projects.
- D. Grosjacques asked for an overview of what Reservoir Dogs is. M. Gauvin explained that it is a group of STEP biologists, district biologists and assistant district biologists with lakes and reservoirs in their districts.
  - D. Grosjacques expressed that many Oregonians do all their fishing in reservoirs and is happy to see that they are getting some attention and have plans for restoration and enhancement.
  - K. Brown asked about how we prioritize these projects. M. Gauvin said the group looks at need, cost, geographic location (in relation to other project sites for efficiency), who will benefit, etc.

#### Unwanted fish projects

- K. Brown asked if all the projects are rotenone projects, M. Gauvin answered that some of them are netting projects.
- R. Heap asked if M. Gauvin has expressed to these groups that the R&E Board is reluctant to continue funding these recurring projects year after year. M. Gauvin said yes, and he is working with management staff on some options.
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- This group is meeting next in early October.
- K. Brown said it's very helpful to have this priority list for the board to know where ODFW ranks these projects. There was discussion about how the State needs to find regular budget funding to finance these continuing projects year after year and let R&E focus on non-recurring things.

#### RM&E Projects

- Rubric categories are Policy and Management Implications, Scientific Merit, and Logistical Planning.
- M. Gauvin talked about the trout stocking evaluation project that illuminated great info on catch rates of different stocks of trout and their size and quality.
- R. Heap talked about how it might be good to see an upper limit on the agency's ask for funding to ensure that outside applicants can still have a chance of receiving R&E funding. R&E funding is remaining static while ask is slowly increasing. Don't want to see R&E become the agency's funding backstop when they aren't raising fees on a regular basis. Buying power decreases each year as funding remains static.

#### Board Member Updates

C. Johnson: Spent 5-6 months up in Bristol Bay. There were record returns of sockeye. The system is all-natural production, great gillnet location. Now he's focusing on the Columbia River, seeing good returns. Starting now to focus on crab season, could open as soon as December first. Boats and gear are being repaired in anticipation of the season. C. Johnson expressed that it has been a pleasure to serve on the R&E Board and that he has enjoyed his time on the board and getting to know everyone and working with them.

S. Chambers: Whiting fishery this year is going not so great. Not catching very many salmon though so that's good news. S. Chambers has been working on offshore wind. Depending on where the platforms are placed, it may limit the fishable areas. Other than that, it has been business as usual. Thanks to Rich and Cary for their service and everything they have contributed.

R. Monroe: In Pacific City, recreational coho in ocean was pretty good. Size of fish were great but fluctuated. Inside the river and bay, there's a 3-mile fishery in the Nestucca. Everything else was good. All the structures, docks, etc. are in good shape and being used. At Dock of the Woods there's less people, not sure why. Beach at Pacific City is worst it's ever been. Sand erosion has resulted in tons of damage to boats and motors. It's cut down on access to the ocean.

D. Grosjacques: Merlin between Umpqua and Rogue. Problems with Northern Pikeminnow. There's an event to catch them. Half-pounder runs have been fantastic from time to time. Big thing in the Rogue that's going on is recovery after the fires. Lots of rehab is going on to get rid of invasive plants. On the Umpqua, regulation was changed that you couldn't keep wild spring chinook because there is a small number of a strain of fish on the South Umpqua. Lots of driving back and forth is being done between Cole Rivers and Rock Creek area.

R. Heap: Some of the worst Chinook season ever. Coho are bait stealers here (joke). California is having an excellent season, better than last year which was better than the previous year which was better than the previous year. Removal of the Klamath dams is still on schedule for spring 2023. Met halibut quota. Tuna have been off the chart as close as 30 miles. Reservoirs are very low to the point that boats cannot be launched. Roads are closed to many lakes like Crane Prairie. Port commission got funding for waste treatment plant for fish plant, but it's been difficult determining where to put it.

K. Brown: July- attended Port of Bandon ADA dock opening. Mike Gray was there, it was a great event. Very windy. Biggest complaint is there is no salmon season on the Coquille. There was a salmon derby planned off the St Helens area that had to be changed to a sturgeon derby because of the closure of the Columbia. It was successful and fun.

Yancy: see submitted email: "Dave asked for a Central Oregon report, so here are some comments. In short, it's grim. East Lake is low enough that most boats cannot launch. It's worse on Prineville and Wickiup Reservoirs which are almost empty. Paulina Lake has water and is fishing OK. Crane Prairie has water but has been fishing slow all summer and is now pretty much closed due to the Cedar Creek Fire.

The Crooked River has been flowing as low as 1 CFS (!) below the City of Prineville, killing that part of the river. The Crooked out of Prineville Reservoir is scheduled to go to 10 CFS on September 15, which will kill one of the most popular trout fishing stretches in Oregon. It will take years of above average snowfall for that section of the river to recover. The Metolius and Lower Deschutes are low but have water and the fishing has been OK. Steelhead fishing on the Lower Deschutes opened on August 15, but the returns are barely above last year and if they don't increase the river will be closed again. The John Day is scheduled to close soon for steelhead fishing due to low returns."

### **Presentations**

Presentations from projects who received R&E funding in the past were given.

### **Board Elections**

D. Grosjacques nominated Yancy for chair and K. Brown seconded. Motion was carried unanimously.

K. Brown nominated D. Grosjacques for vice chair, R. Monroe seconded. Motion was carried unanimously.

### **Administrative Discussion**

M. Gauvin discussed that the recruiting process for C. Johnson and Rich's positions is under way with the goal to have new RE Board candidates to be presented to the Commission at the December commission meeting with no gaps.

M. Olson talked about the upcoming annual report. Then spoke about calendar timeline. Cycle 1 deadline is January. Cycle 1 meeting us typically in Salem. D. Grosjacques asked about meeting in Roseburg in March or September. M. Gauvin said let's maybe shoot for September because March in Salem is convenient for all, and we typically have many projects to review for Cycle 1. Late March sounds like the best time in March for the meeting. Board members have used doodle polls before. Looking at 3<sup>rd</sup> week in March and 3<sup>rd</sup> week in September.

### **Rich and Cary Words of Wisdom**

Shaun Clements joined us virtually to thank Rich and Cary for their service on the R&E board. He talked about how he saw improvements in the program during their time.

C. Johnson talked about his experiences serving on the board and the importance of the work that the agency, with the help of the board, is doing for salmon and the future of them. There was discussion about unity and coming together to tackle the difficult problems we are facing with water and salmon and other limited resources. C. Johnson talked about how amazing it is to be part of a program like R&E having come from a family of fishermen. His family literally settled here for salmon and is hopeful to see the natural resource continue to yield for people here as it is an important part of the Pacific Northwest culture.

R. Heap spoke about how great it was to volunteer on a board that doesn't waste his time. Everyone comes to meetings prepared and ready to do the important work it has been tasked with. We are putting the \$4 from each angler to good use to serve those anglers. He talked about how good it feels to have had a part in the

improvements made in the past 16 years. Oregon is a state where the public gets to participate and have a say in the management of these resources. The highlight of his time has been spending time in the field with ODFW and other volunteers working on projects. It's one of the greatest strengths of ODFW. R. Heap talked about the future and his hopes that the good work will continue.

Members of the group thanked Rich and Cary for their service and shared some stories of what stood out in their memories from serving together.

Chair R. Heap adjourned the meeting at 4:15.