



Native Fish Society

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The Native Fish Society is a forward-thinking organization guided by the best available science to advocate for historically abundant wild, native fish and promote the stewardship of habitats that sustain them

July 16, 2010

To: Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
Subject: 2011-2013 Agency Budget Request

My name is Jim Myron. I am here today representing the Native Fish Society to offer a few comments on the agency's proposed budget for the 2011-2013 biennium. My comments will focus specifically on how limited general fund dollars might be allocated in the agency as well as how the fish propagation program could be evaluated to improve its fiscal effectiveness and reduce its environmental risks.

Allocating Limited General Fund Dollars

It seems clear that general fund allocations to the agency will continue to decline. The commission may need to be planning for the time when the agency no longer receives any general fund dollars. Until then, these limited dollars should be allocated to programs within the agency that benefit the public at large, not any specific user group. Programs in that category include the Oregon Conservation Strategy, the Wildlife Diversity Program and a number of conservation-related programs within both the Fish and Wildlife Divisions. These programs cannot currently access "Other Fund" revenues and must rely on support from state and federal taxpayers. If and when the general fund allocation to the agency is gone, is the commission prepared to use license revenues to support these programs? Since conserving native fish and wildlife resources is the core mission of the agency, and supports all of the consumptive uses, it seems logical that license dollars should be used to support this primary mission.

Oregon Hatchery Accountability Project

The Native Fish Society has proposed a project that would improve the fiscal and environmental accountability of the Propagation Program while making it more sustainable in the long term. Much like the process that the department has gone through to evaluate and prioritize all of the various programs within the agency, the Hatchery Accountability Project would accomplish the same sort of prioritization with the various hatchery programs. When reductions in the propagation program must occur, the department would have a blueprint for accomplishing those reductions that would retain the most productive and cost-effective programs while reducing or eliminating those programs that are either too costly or too risky to naturally spawning populations of wild fish. The Native Fish Society views this as a long-term project that will take some time to accomplish. We are asking the commission to direct the staff to begin developing plans that would result in having this valuable accountability tool in place within two years.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide you with the Native Fish Society's perspective on the proposed budget.