



# Oregon Anglers

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I am Executive Director of Oregon Anglers and the Oregon Anglers Research Society. We now are focusing on OARS, our charitable corporation which funds, or finds funding, for research and educational projects in the fisheries area. I am privileged to have served on the Stakeholder Advisory Board of the Oregon Hatchery Research Center since the startup; as vice chair its' first year, and chair for the next two years.

I support this bill, but I may lose my seat on the advisory board because I'm going to let it all out during this testimony.

I first want to say that our staff there is incredible! Dr. David Noakes is one of the top fisheries scientists in the world, and Ryan Couture, the hatchery manager, and his staff are top rate.

But there is been a pervading feeling by fishermen, city and county leaders, and several legislators, that we have not made much progress toward the mission of the OHRC. Questions arise whether the Scientific Advisory Board, OSU or ODFW are holding up progress. Especially since Dr. Noakes is evaluated by both ODFW and OSU.

The economic effect is that operationally ODFW is strongly anti-hatchery. I have served on the Coastal Coho Recovery Plan and Upper Willamette Recovery Plan committees as the sport fishing representative. Both plans have cut hatchery mitigation severely that has impacted the local economies. Coastal Coho were cut by 80%, and the cuts are still going on in the Valley.

One frustration is that ODFW does not accept any of the positive hatchery research and recovery examples, done by U.S Fish and Wildlife, the tribes, or other states like Idaho. At a meeting of the Upper Willamette Recovery Plan I introduced a most recent research report by USF&W, Abernathy Creek Research Facility, across the Columbia River It proved with by video that hatchery smolt did not negatively impact wild smolt when leaving the natal stream at the same time. This was the main reason why ODFW was recommending cutting hatchery mitigation during the discussion. I was told it was irrelevant, and that they were all kinds of research. I was shut out of the discussion at that point.

I welcome a dependable funding base for the research center. I also believe that a re-shuffling of the OHRC advisory board should help it refocus on the original mission. However that board should meet at least quarterly. When I chaired the present advisory board, we met more often. Found that cutting it back to 4 times a year was enough to keep up with research and operations, but much more than that burned out participants

because of the travel involved for some. In addition, Dr, Noakes and Ryan keep us all electronically well updated.

It is ironic that the OHRC is now working on a contract with the Corps of Engineers to come up with hundreds of thousands of "surrogate" Spring Chinook (hatchery salmon that act like wild salmon) which is right in line with what we should be doing. But, the goal of the Corps is to prove that "wild" salmon smolts can survive the descent over the dams on the Willamette systems, with the goal of ending mitigation responsibilities.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dennis Richey". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Dennis Richey  
OARS