



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF OREGON

April 11, 2013

To: Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources
Senator Chris Edwards and Representative Ben Unger, Co-Chairs
Members of the Committee

Re: HB 5013 – Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW): SUPPORT

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, grassroots political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. The League has strong positions on both water quality and quantity. The national League *“believes that natural resources should be managed as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems.”* It is with these focused and broad policies that we provide testimony today in support of ODFW’s proposed budget:

We support the increase in General Funds proposed because the mission of this agency is to protect and enhance Oregon’s fish and wildlife and their habitats for present and future generations. That job should not fall only on our hunters and fishers. However, those license funds should be focused on supporting those endeavors. As was noted in the agency’s presentation to you, Oregonians are switching their enjoyment from these activities to wildlife viewing and other more passive activities. The increasing use of web technology, with the provision of layers of maps, will only increase tourism within and outside of Oregon to our beautiful state. That’s good for our economy—even without a sales tax.

Although many programs are funded with “Other Funds” or “Federal Funds” and are important to the agency, we will focus on General Fund and Lottery Fund requests:

We support the \$5.2 million General Fund request to backfill the losses of Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund monies, as the work done by those funds is critical to their mission.

We support POP 116, (\$249,144 GF) related to the Integrated Water Resources Strategy. As we move forward with increased water management, including the possibility of new storage, it will be important to have the scientific support to also protect our salmon and other water creatures.

We support POP 121 (\$1,281,789 LF) to continue the scientific work in our marine reserves. Continuing the public engagement and contracting with our local fishers on this work is good for the project and good for the coastal economy.

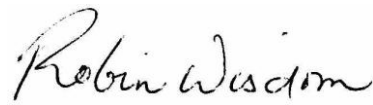
We support monies to address the conflicts between renewable energy projects and our incredible sage grouse. If a plan can be developed that stops the sage grouse from federal listing—because we’ve taken actions to save it—it will be good for both the grouse and Oregon’s economy.

We are concerned that there are no monies to begin the update of the Oregon Conservation Strategy, due by 2015. This commitment, to revisit that incredible work, should be honored.

ODFW was a great partner in developing the Integrated Water Resources Strategy. They will be an important partner as the strategy moves toward implementation. We have been impressed by the cross-agency cooperation (and were pleased to hear about the shared position to improve processes with the “Lean” expert). That kind of interagency cooperation should be encouraged and supported.

We urge your consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,



Robin Wisdom
President



Peggy Lynch
Natural Resources Coordinator