



Oregon

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Department of Fish and Wildlife

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To: The Honorable Brad Witt, Chair
House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee



Testimony by
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Testimony on House Bill 2249

Good morning Chair Witt and members of the Committee. We appreciate the opportunity to discuss House Bill 2249 with you today. HB 2249 would establish a dedicated account within State Treasury for the long-term investment of mitigation funds received from the Bonneville Power Administration.

In October, 2010, Governor Kulongoski signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Bonneville Power Administration to permanently resolve the federal wildlife mitigation responsibilities under the Northwest Power Act related to the Willamette River Basin Flood Control Project Dams.

In the agreement, Bonneville committed to provide \$117 million over a 15 year period to meet the remaining mitigation obligation in the Willamette Basin. Bonneville has also committed to provide \$26 million to ODFW for mitigation operations and maintenance during this same 15 year period. The State of Oregon has agreed to manage the program and recommend habitat for protection to Bonneville Power Administration over the term of the agreement.

The agreement establishes that a portion of the funding be dedicated to stewardship in order to fund the long-term operations, maintenance, and protection of properties. The agreement states that "ODFW shall hold the Stewardship Account in trust for wildlife and use the Stewardship Account, including the principal and all interest, investment, and other proceeds derived for investment of the principal, solely for long term operation, maintenance, and protection, activities that preserve or advance the conservation values of the properties purchased under this Agreement." In order to accomplish this, ODFW requires legislative authorization to establish a Stewardship Account.

House Bill 2249 would establish the Willamette River Basin Bonneville Power Administration Stewardship Fund and allow Treasury to invest stewardship funding in the Oregon Intermediate Term Pool (OITP). Once established, expenditures from this account will be controlled and directed by Legislative authorization as part of the Department's biennial budget.

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