



NATIVE FISH SOCIETY

Advancing the Recovery of Native, Wild Fish in Their Homewaters

April 6, 2015

STATEMENT TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES OPPOSING SB 803

The Native Fish Society (NFS) is a regional wild fish advocacy organization with over seven hundred members. Our mission is to protect and restore wild native fish and their habitats.

When the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) first developed the Coastal Multi-Species Conservation and Management Plan (CMP), at the request of some local fishing interests they included a provision in the plan that would allow a new fish hatchery program for spring Chinook in the Yacquina and Coos watersheds. However, the plan specified that the proponents of the plan would need to provide the funding for this new program. The CMP was subsequently adopted.

At the meeting of the Fish and Wildlife Commission when the ODFW budget was adopted, in a last minute change and without public involvement, ODFW staff added a policy option package using general fund dollars to pay for the program. The governor did not agree with the department's request and did not include the POP in the Governor's Recommended Budget. Now the proponents are asking the Legislature to do what the governor was unwilling to do.

The Native Fish Society has consistently opposed the project but we lost that battle when the commission adopted the CMP. While we can no longer oppose this new hatchery program, we can and will continue to oppose the idea that the public should pay for it.

If this new spring Chinook hatchery program is to be implemented, it should be paid for either by the proponents of the plan, as ODFW originally concluded, or it should be paid for by the commercial and recreational fishing interests who hope to gain financially if the program is implemented. **The program should not be paid for by the taxpayers of Oregon, who have nothing to gain from this risky new hatchery program.**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in opposition to SB 803.

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