



April 7, 2015

Senator Richard Devlin, Co-Chair and
Representative Dan Rayfield, Co-Chair
Joint Ways and Means Natural Resources Subcommittee
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301



Dear Senator Devlin and Representative Rayfield,

During our March 31, 2015 budget hearing, the Natural Resources Subcommittee of Ways and Means asked several questions. Below are the Department's responses.

Question: What are the license sales trends for daily fishing licenses?

License sales for daily angling licenses are listed below. Prices for resident and nonresident daily angling licenses are the same.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
PREPAID DAILY	42,954	41,348	44,866	46,640	49,032
ONE-DAY	89,876	89,864	91,329	91,136	97,019
TWO-DAY	19,713	18,901	19,334	19,290	20,898
THREE-DAY	12,330	12,322	12,491	12,703	13,908
FOUR-DAY	3,971	3,819	4,053	3,903	4,885
NR 7-DAY	9,645	9,675	10,379	10,334	10,051

Question: What will be the cost of a daily fishing licenses and shellfish licenses through 2020?

A daily fishing license includes a combined angling tag allowing fishing for salmon, steelhead, sturgeon and Pacific halibut and is the same cost for residents and nonresidents.

The department proposes to increase the cost of the one-day angling license (for either resident or non-resident) by \$1.75 for the years 2016-2017. The fee would increase \$3 in 2018 and an additional \$3 in 2020. If the daily fishing license is being used for ocean fishing, a \$1.00 Ocean Endorsement fee will be required beginning in 2016.

The cost of shellfish licenses has not increased since the license was first instituted in 2003. The current cost of a non-resident 3-day shellfish license is \$11.50, and it is proposed to increase to \$17 in 2016-2017 and to \$19 in 2018-2021. No increase is proposed for 2020. Shellfish licenses will increase only in the first two biennia. An additional increase is not needed in 2020.

We believe gradually raising the price of licenses will reduce sticker shock and loss of sales compared to past approaches, while still providing the funding necessary to manage fish and wildlife.

Resident Adult

	1-day License	Shellfish	Ocean Endorsement	Total
Current	\$16.75	\$7.00	\$0.00	\$23.75
2016	\$18.50	\$9.00	\$1.00	\$28.50
2018	\$21.50	\$10.00	\$1.00	\$32.50
2020	\$24.50	\$10.00	\$1.00	\$35.50

Resident / Nonresident Juvenile

	Angling License	Shellfish	Ocean Endorsement	Total
Current - Res	\$9.00	\$7.00	\$0.00	\$16.00
Current - NR	\$16.75	\$11.50	\$0.00	\$28.25
2016	\$10.00	included	included	\$10.00
2018	\$10.00	included	included	\$10.00
2020	\$10.00	included	included	\$10.00

NOTE: Beginning in 2016, the annual resident and nonresident juvenile license includes basic fishing, hunting, shellfish, Columbia Basin and Ocean Endorsement. Youth combined angling tag, upland bird and waterfowl stamps, and turkey tag available at reduced price. Nonresident youth are also able to purchase the \$10 youth license and privileges. Currently, nonresident youth are charged \$26.75 for angling and shellfish.

Nonresident Adult

	1-day License	NR 3-day Shellfish	Ocean Endorsement	Total
Current	\$16.75	\$11.50	\$0.00	\$28.25
2016	\$18.50	\$17.00	\$1.00	\$36.50
2018	\$21.50	\$19.00	\$1.00	\$41.50
2020	\$24.50	\$19.00	\$1.00	\$44.50

When developing this package, one of our objectives was to minimize the impact on families. The new youth license at \$10 will allow participation in all basic hunting, fishing, and shell fish harvesting activities in Oregon for the entire year at a significantly lower cost.

Question: In Policy Option Package 128 – Lower Deschutes River Ranch Acquisition, what is the amount and source of Federal funds requested?

Policy Option Package 128 requests limitation to spend funds acquired through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for acquisition of over 10,000 acres known as the Lower Deschutes River Ranch. The total project cost, including acquisition and survey costs, is \$3,138,350.

The Department is requesting \$1,290,000 in Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (Pittman-Robertson) Funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Additional Federal Funds contributing to this project include \$135,000 in Land and Water Conservation Funds.

Non-federal contributions include \$1,048,350 in Ruby Pipeline Mitigation Funds; \$25,000 from the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep; \$25,000 from the Oregon Wild Sheep Foundation, and \$665,000 from the Trust for Public Lands. Trust for Public Lands funds are being contributed directly to the project escrow, and are not received by the Department.

Question: What is the cost for administrative removal of cougars as a means of population control?

The Department manages cougar populations according to its 2006 Oregon Cougar Management Plan (Plan). This Plan established five objectives that seek to maintain a viable, healthy cougar population, reduce conflicts with cougars, and to manage cougars in a manner compatible with other game mammal species using proactive, adaptive management strategies. To achieve these objectives, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) implements a zone-based quota system that accounts for all cougar mortalities in the different zones around Oregon. This includes hunter-harvest and administrative removals.

The Plan includes implementation of Target Areas to address recurring cougar-related conflicts in specific areas by decreasing cougar abundance when hunter-harvest of cougars is insufficient. When administrative removals of cougars on a Target Area are at an appropriate level, cougar abundance is expected to decrease, thereby having a positive effect on the specific issue being addressed for a Target Area. Implementation of a Target Area typically occurs for 3–4 years.

During 2007–2013, cougars were administratively removed from Target Areas using Department employees, USDA Wildlife Services employees, and volunteer agents. The average cost for cougar removal within that time period was approximately \$1,500 per cougar. While the volunteer agents were substantially less expensive for removal efforts than Department or Wildlife Services personnel due to not incurring salary costs, overall they were not as efficient. Volunteer agents had to fit removal efforts into family and other obligations which reduced the amount of time they were available to assist on the project.

Agents volunteer their time and dogs, and the Department provides traps and trapping supplies. Because of the time and travel required to implement a target area the Department reimburses volunteer agents for mileage, use of ATV's, increased costs of maintaining dogs and a portion of any veterinarian bills incurred.

All funds used for Target Area implementation were Department license funds; no state general funds, tax dollars, or federal funds were used for implementing cougar removal in Target Areas.

Department costs to administer hunting seasons for cougar are covered by staff. General seasons are already being administered; if controlled hunts were implemented they would be incorporated into the controlled hunt administrative processes currently used for controlled hunts for other species. Hunting seasons also have a positive revenue value because both resident and non-resident hunters are required to purchase a cougar tag (\$14.50) in addition to their hunting license (\$29.50 for residents, \$148.50 for nonresidents).

Please let me know if you have further questions.

Sincerely,



Curtis E. Melcher, Director