

Dear Joint Ways and Means Committee Members,

Please support SB 247 and the nominal fee increases it contains.

Please keep ODFW's Fish Water Program and assistant district biologist staffing no lower than current levels. With all the added responsibilities and expenses of the last few years coupled with minimal funding increases, ODFW needs neither reduced funding nor staff.

Fish need water, Oregon needs fish and the critical ODFW programs and staff to manage them. ODFW staff are critical in every water allocation and reallocation decision in Oregon.

These programs and management decisions are essential and must be maintained regardless of the budget climate at ODFW and regardless of fee increases or modifications of general fund appropriations.

NOW is NOT the time to divest ODFW of expertise and water resources.

Please include my comments in the OLIS record.

Thank you for your consideration.

Robert Rasmussen
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