



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF OREGON

May 27, 2015

To: Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
Senator Chris Edwards, Chair  
Members of the Committee

Re: HB 3315A, Reimbursement Authority for Oregon Fish and Wildlife Department (ODFW)

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, grassroots political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. The League has numerous positions related to fair taxation and revenue. We also support the Conservation Strategy of ODFW. We believe that licenses and fees have a purpose, but that the General Fund has a responsibility related to the general public's interests. We support the balanced increase in ODFW licenses and fees this session along with a substantial infusion of General Funds to assure the public's interest in Oregon's fish and wildlife is addressed.

It is with those positions in mind that we support HB 3315, requiring that ODFW track and report hours spent by department staff on reviewing permits and activities of other agencies. The League was privileged to have been invited to participate in ODFW's External Budget Advisory Committee this past year. We listened and learned from other stakeholders about the services provided by the department in a wide variety of areas. Although we are not fond of fee increases, we accepted the need in order for the department to provide the services required for our hunting and fishing population. But we also agreed that some monies should be provided by the General Fund.

There was also a discussion of the expertise provided by ODFW staff when a wide variety of permits are issued under other agencies' authority. The Water Resources Department, Department of Environmental Quality and Department of Energy are but three that come to mind. We believe it is not fair that hunting and fishing licensees should unduly bear the burden of those costs; therefore, we urge passage of this bill to direct ODFW to do time management studies to determine the costs now born for those requests to determine where shared responsibilities lie.

It will be the job of the 2017 legislature to determine how those bills should be paid. But at least you will have the information needed to make that hard decision.

Thank you for considering our comments and we urge you to move HB 3315 out of committee with a "do pass" recommendation.

Sincerely,

Robin Wisdom  
President

Peggy Lynch  
Natural Resources Coordinator