

ODFW Issue Backgrounder: **Options to avoid closure of Leaburg Fish Hatchery**

Requester: Rep. Hayden

Date: March 5, 2019

Contact: Shannon Hurn (503) 947-6072 shannon.h.hurn@state.or.us

- **On July 1, 2018, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) ended the funding and operation of the Leaburg Fish Hatchery located on the McKenzie River near Leaburg, Oregon**
 - The Corps constructed Leaburg Hatchery in 1953 to mitigate for lost trout habitat blocked by federal dams in the Willamette Valley.
 - The Corps funded ODFW to operate the hatchery since constructed.
 - The hatchery produced about 459,000 trout and 108,000 summer steelhead annually for stocking in the Willamette Valley; this production was not lost. The Corps contracts with a private vendor for the trout and continues to fund ODFW for the steelhead at another facility.
 - The Corps is currently leasing Leaburg Hatchery to ODFW at no cost and is looking at how to transfer ownership to ODFW.
- **In the 2018 short session, the Oregon Legislature provided interim funding to avoid closure and loss of staff in the interim (Jul 2018 – Jun 2019)**
 - Legislative Appropriation - \$0.35M General Fund.
 - ODFW contributed \$0.15M OF-license from the Columbia River Endorsement fund balance.
- **With the bridge funding, ODFW is producing:**
 - An additional 100,000 trophy trout (1 to 2 pounds each) for the Willamette Valley and an additional 260,000 spring Chinook smolts for release in the Coast Fork of the Willamette River.
 - Leaburg currently has three full time and two seasonal positions, which will all terminate June 30, 2019.
- **Finding permanent funding and taking over Leaburg Hatchery provides the State with unique opportunities to improve fishing, add flexibility within the hatchery system, and contribute to local economies**
 - ODFW estimates cost for current production at \$1.74M per biennium.
 - ODFW would continue to produce 100,000 trophy trout and 260,000 spring Chinook smolts for release in Willamette basin waters annually.
 - Leaburg is one of Oregon's largest hatcheries, with 40 raceways and the capacity to rear 285,000 pounds of fish.
 - While there are other hatcheries nearby, all are owned and operated by the Corps under contract to ODFW; there is no surplus capacity at these facilities and the Corps controls their use.
 - Hatchery fish produced at Leaburg Hatchery have little to no conservation risk to recovery efforts in the Willamette, as they are released in rivers not targeted for recovery. All programs will operate under federal authorization from NOAA Fisheries.
 - Both sport **and** commercial fishers benefit from the current production at Leaburg, with the potential for additional benefits if the unused capacity at Leaburg is used in the future.
- **Leaburg Hatchery has already proven to be an irreplaceable asset in Oregon's portfolio for dealing with climate change, fire and drought impacts to other hatcheries**
 - Leaburg is a well-built and maintained facility, with an excellent water supply in close proximity to some of the State's highest demand fisheries.
 - ODFW holds a 100 cubic foot per second water right – one of the largest water rights in Oregon's hatchery system, providing a year-round supply of cool, high quality water, an irreplaceable asset as Oregon deals with the effects of climate change and drought.
 - In the absence of Leaburg Hatchery, Oregon will have little to no capacity to mitigate for natural and human-caused events that continually put hatchery production and the fisheries they support at risk.
 - Examples of how Oregon has benefitted from Leaburg in recent years include:
 - 1,000,000 Umatilla and Lostine Coho salmon, normally raised at Cascade Hatchery, were overwintered at Leaburg after the Columbia Gorge wildfires – 2016-2017.
 - 500,000 Umatilla Coho salmon from Cascade Hatchery overwintered again at Leaburg due to unstable watershed conditions from the Columbia Gorge wildfires – 2017-2018.

- 165,000 Rock Creek Hatchery spring Chinook salmon held over the summer at Leaburg due to reduced water supplies and warm water temperatures at Rock Creek Hatchery – 2018.
 - ODFW transferred 600,000 McKenzie River spring Chinook from McKenzie Hatchery to Leaburg due to water supply issues at that facility when the Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) had to drain the water supply canal for FERC mandated levee repairs – 2018-2019.
- **Leaburg Hatchery has been instrumental in providing diverse fisheries for recreational and commercial fisheries throughout the state**
 - Rainbow trout for recreational fisheries in waterbodies throughout the Willamette Valley; 100,000 trophy sized current annual release, 460,000 legal and trophy sized past annual release.
 - Summer steelhead for recreational fisheries on the McKenzie River; 108,000 annual smolt release.
 - Increasing trout releases by 20% in the Willamette Valley greatly enhances recreational fishing and brings additional economic benefits to communities throughout the valley.
 - Increasing spring Chinook (Oregon’s most prized salmon species) releases by about 6% in the valley will bring significant benefits to sport fisheries from the lower Columbia to the upper Willamette, particularly in the areas of Willamette Falls, Cottage Grove, Creswell, Springfield and Eugene. This represents a significant low-cost opportunity to enhance sport fisheries in the heart of Oregon’s population centers.
 - Spring Chinook for Select Area Fisheries Enhancement (SAFE) commercial fisheries in the Columbia River basin; 250,000-750,000 past smolt releases.
- **No new hatcheries being built in Oregon, once it’s closed, it’s unlikely to reopen at a later date**
 - If shuttered with no one maintaining the facility:
 - Infrastructure will degrade and fail quickly, with significant expense to repair if reopened.
 - ODFW will re-distribute supplies and equipment to other facilities; resulting in significant start-up costs should Leaburg be re-opened in the future.
 - Building a new facility like Leaburg would cost millions and Oregon has not built a new hatchery in over 40 years. Washington is rebuilding Ringold Hatchery at a cost that is likely to exceed \$100M.
 - Oregon would be acquiring Leaburg from the federal government at little to no cost.
- **Southern Resident Killer Whales**
 - Southern Resident Killer Whales are [critically endangered](#). Their decline is primarily due to a decline in Chinook salmon abundance.
 - Unfortunately, for these whales, they eat almost nothing but Chinook salmon, which make up of more than 80% of their diet. Today, two-thirds of orca pregnancies fail due to nutritional stress.
 - In March of 2018 the Southern Resident Orca Task Force was called together to develop a long-term plan for recovering orcas. The task force includes nearly 50 members representing a wide range of sectors including state agencies, the legislature, and state, tribal, federal and local governments, as well as private sector and non-profit organizations.
 - The taskforce has made several recommendations to implement immediately in hopes of preserving the populations, the main overarching goals to benefit orcas is to increase the abundance of Chinook salmon.
 - Both Washington and Oregon are looking at increasing their spring Chinook runs increased production at existing hatchery facilities.

Agency Name:

Department of Fish and Wildlife

Policy Option Package Initiative:

115 - Leaburg Hatchery

Policy Option Package Element Addendum:

PURPOSE

DESCRIPTION OF PROBLEM OR ISSUE:

US Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) will defund Leaburg Hatchery on July 1, 2018. The result is that without additional funding Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) will close Leaburg hatchery and lose the production capacity of over 554,000 pounds (277,000 pounds per year) of fish for Oregonians. The loss of Leaburg hatchery will also jeopardize ODFW ability to meet its statewide fish propagation goals. \$250,000 was granted during the 2018 short session to keep Leaburg Hatchery open through the end of the 17-19 biennium.

HOW ACHIEVED

PROPOSED SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OR ISSUE:

ODFW is requesting state funds to continue operation of Leaburg Hatchery. Funding Leaburg Hatchery will allow ODFW to expand fishing opportunities on spring Chinook by maximizing the allowable production under the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) approved Hatchery Genetic Management Plan (HGMP), and by increasing trophy rainbow trout production. Keeping Leaburg Hatchery will also provide flexibility and future options desired given the uncertainty of USACOE funding commitments, climate changes and natural disasters, e.g., 2017 Eagle Creek fire.

This request will provide base funding for hatchery operations. Operations will include production of 520,000 (260,000 per year) spring Chinook and 200,000 (100,000 per year) trophy sized trout for release in the Willamette basin. Spring Chinook salmon will be spawned in 2018 with the first scheduled release of 260,000 smolt in 2020. Rainbow trout fingerlings will be transferred to Leaburg in July 2018 to "jump start" production that will expedite production for release in 2019. Trout eggs will be taken in 2018 to provide trophy sized trout for release in 2020. Additional support from Fish Health, Fish ID, and Fish Liberation will be required.

Task 1. Spring Chinook adults will be collected at either McKenzie or Willamette Hatchery in July and spawned in September 2018. Approximately 300,000 eyed-eggs will be shipped to Leaburg Hatchery. Eggs will be incubated and hatched. Fry will be reared, marked, and released as smolts in the Coast Fork River, a tributary of Willamette River near Eugene. In 2018, 110,000 rainbow trout fingerlings (triploid) will be transfer to Leaburg Hatchery and released in 2019. In September and October, approximately 150,000 eyed-eggs will be transferred to Leaburg for rearing and release in 2020. Eggs will be provided from either Oak Springs or Roaring River hatcheries. Target trophy trout enhancement sites include: Detroit Reservoir 80,000; Cottage Grove 40,000; Dorena 40,000; and 20,000 TBA.

Task 2. Fish and Wildlife Senior Technicians will perform transport duties for spring Chinook and trophy trout. Approximately 60 to 70 trips are required to transfer and safely release fish. Additional days are required for equipment and vehicle service.

Task 3. A fish marking trailer will be deployed for approximately 15 to 20 days per biennium to adipose fin clip and embed code wire tags (CWT) in 50,000 spring Chinook.

The expected outcomes are expanded fishing opportunities for recreational sport anglers and adaptability to climate change and natural disasters.

HOW THIS FURTHERS THE AGENCY MISSION OR GOALS:

Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) policy statutory obligation (506.109) directs ODFW to manage food fish and "To provide the optimum economic, commercial, recreational and aesthetic benefits for present and future generations."

PERFORMANCE MEASURES TO QUANTIFY THE SUCCESS OF THE PROPOSAL:

The success of Leaburg Hatchery operations will be quantified in couple ways:

- The number of spring Chinook salmon and trophy trout released in the Willamette tributaries.
- The number of enhanced trophy trout fishing opportunities in several waterbodies located in the Willamette basin as reflected in additional fishing time, increased number of anglers, and increased harvest. These actions directly relate to key performance measure (KPM) 2 (Angling License Purchases - Percent of the license buying population with angling licenses and tags), and KPM 7 (Percent of customers rating their satisfaction with the agency's customer service as "good" or "excellent" for timeliness, accuracy, helpfulness, expertise and availability of information).

STATUTORY REFERENCE:

Relevant statutes are 506.109, 506.119, 506.129

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REASONS FOR REJECTION:

Accept the loss of fish production capacity in Oregon hatcheries. This alternative was rejected because it was inconsistent with fisheries management strategies, reduced the ability to enhance fisheries, and reduced the flexibility to adapt production strategies caused by climate changes and natural disasters.

IMPACT OF NOT FUNDING:

Would not be able to implement the enhanced fisheries management strategies to meet objectives adopted by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission.

EQUIPMENT TO BE PURCHASED (IF APPLICABLE):

Field Supplies needed for hatchery staff

STAFFING IMPACT

Task 1. Operate and maintain Leaburg Hatchery to produce spring Chinook and rainbow trout (triploid) for release in the Willamette Basin:

Shift one (2100523) Fish and Wildlife Manager 1 (X8344) from 14% OF/86%FF to 100% GF - Permanent Full-Time position (1.00 FTE)
Shift one (2100474) Fish and Wildlife Senior Tech (C8342) from 14% OF/86% FF to 100% GF - Permanent Full-Time position (1.00 FTE)
Shift five (2100398, 2100412, 2100414, 2100090, 2100400) Fish and Wildlife Technicians (C8341) from 14% OF/86% FF to 100% GF - Permanent Full-Time positions (5.00 FTE)

Task 2. Load, transfer, and release spring chinook and trophy trout. Additional duties include monitoring of fish in transit, maintaining fish liberation equipment, fuel, travel, cell phone, and disinfecting equipment:

Establish one (1921014) Fish and Wildlife Senior Tech (C8342) permanent part-time (12 months) position (0.50 FTE)

Task 3. Fish Marking. No additional staff are needed to complete tasks associated with fish marking.

8 total positions (7.5 FTE)

QUANTIFYING RESULTS:

Effectiveness of this Policy Option Package will be determined by a combination of the amount of recreational license sales, returned hatchery tags, and customer service, which will be determined through feedback from angling interest groups and local communities and their businesses.

REVENUE SOURCE (010-05-04-31000):

\$1,744,086 General Fund
(\$141,508) Other Funds
(\$866,078) Federal Funds

From: Ed Bowles <Ed.Bowles@state.or.us>
Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2019 11:37 PM
To: Rep Hayden
Cc: MELCHER Curt
Subject: FW: Orca meals

Rep. Hayden... As per your request, the email below outlines my response to WA on our potential to help increase spring Chinook production for Orca forage. Please let me know if you have additional questions. Thanks... Ed

Ed Bowles
Fish Division Administrator
(503) 580-6010

From: Ed Bowles
Sent: Friday, February 15, 2019 3:44 PM
To: Ron Warren (ron.warren@dfw.wa.gov) <ron.warren@dfw.wa.gov>; Guy Norman - NPCC (gnorman@nwcouncil.org) <gnorman@nwcouncil.org>
Cc: Chris Kern <Chris.J.Kern@coho2.dfw.state.or.us>; Bruce McIntosh <Bruce.A.McIntosh@coho2.dfw.state.or.us>; Curt Melcher <Curt.Melcher@coho2.dfw.state.or.us>; Shannon Hurn <Shannon.M.Hurn@coho2.dfw.state.or.us>; Scott Patterson <Scott.D.Patterson@coho2.dfw.state.or.us>
Subject: Orca meals

Hey Ron and Guy... Just a quick follow up to discussions we've had on using Oregon's existing infrastructure in areas of low ecological risk to help meet production objectives for orca forage. I understand that the WDFW budget request included production of an additional 3M Willamette ChS for orcas. After looking into more thoroughly, we can readily accommodate nearly all of this target using existing infrastructure while remaining within HGMP guidelines. This would be a blend of additional SAFE and upper Willamette River releases, with small additions in the Sandy and Clackamas. We have the 2018 cohort for this additional production (~1.9M) already in the queue, so this represents one of the quickest and ecologically-safest routes to providing additional orca forage available to the region. The only caveat is that most of the additional upper Willamette releases are dependent on continued funding of Leaburg Hatchery, which is not currently funded in the Governor's budget. We have heard there may be legislative efforts to maintain funding. Here's some of the specifics.

1.5 M SAFE (2018 cohort) plus up to an additional 1 M potential for future cohorts (existing infrastructure)
0.250 M (Leaburg, maximizing Willamette HGMP; requires ongoing funding for Leaburg Hatchery)
0.005 M (Clackamas, maximizing Clackamas HGMP; existing infrastructure)
0.168 M (Sandy, new production given we are meeting pHOS goals easily; existing infrastructure)
Total: ~1.9 M for 2018 cohort and ~2.9 M for subsequent cohorts

Funding support from WA: For the full 2018 cohort already in the queue, about \$800k/yr is needed if the Oregon legislature ends up funding Leaburg Hatchery. If not, about \$1.1M/yr is needed. The additional 1M SAFE production for subsequent cohorts would require another \$600k/yr.

Thanks for your ongoing leadership on orca recovery. We look forward to our continued partnership with WA to help make this a reality. Don't hesitate to call with questions, and please keep me in the loop as Washington funding discussions continue. Thanks... Ed

Ed Bowles