



April 1, 2019

**SB 42 – A Restoration & Enhancement Program  
Columbia River Basin Endorsement Fund  
David Moskowitz, Executive Director**

**Chair Senator Dembrow and members of the Senate Committee on the  
Environment and Natural Resources:**

**The Conservation Angler does not support SB 42 - A, which makes permanent the R&E Program and extends the sunset provision for the Columbia River Endorsement Fee**

The Conservation Angler previously testified in opposition to SB 42. TCA remains opposed.

The amended version of SB 42 only goes half-way to fixing the issues with the Restoration and Enhancement Program (R&E) and the Columbia River Endorsement Fund (CREF).

**The R&E Program:** Believe it or not, this program was developed by wild fish advocates in 1989 to begin solving the deferred maintenance at ODFW's hatchery facilities. There was a large backlog of deferred maintenance at that time – something discovered and reported on by a volunteer for Oregon Trout Named Floyd Arms. While ODFW has developed a very orderly and transparent program that collects surcharges on sport and commercial license holders (and effectively uses those funds to leverage other funds), the R&E Program has lost its way because it has failed to address the principle reason for its existence – addressing the deferred maintenance backlog at ODFW's hatchery facilities across Oregon.

TCA does not support repealing the sunset provision until there is a comprehensive assessment by ODFW or an outside consultant that evaluates the current backlog of deferred maintenance (estimated to be more than \$90 million in 2017) and analyzes how effective the R&E Program has been at attacking the backlog over the past 30 years.

TCA does support removing the 120-day reporting duty and easing the requirements for commercial fishing representatives.

**The Columbia River Basin Endorsement Fee and Fund:** SB 830 was compromise between sport and commercial fishers related to the allocation of harvest between the user groups. The Fund was created with an endorsement to the sport license for anyone who fishes for salmon, steelhead or sturgeon in the Columbia Basin.

1. SB 830 Reforms were reviewed by the Washington F&W Commission in 2018 and that review, reinforced by comments from both sport and commercial fishers, found the Columbia River Fisheries Reform had failed all parties.
2. The CRBEF is a not transparent to those who pay the fee.
3. It provides ODFW with a large amount of license fee funds to apply as they see fit for changing fishery management activities.
4. It has been used to fund a hatchery ODFW does not even own nor have permission to use for spring chinook.
5. The conservation issues are an afterthought behind hatchery production and allocation

There is no basis for removing the sunset clause. Any extension should be limited to two years maximum – requiring ODFW to come back in 2021 to seek program renewal.