



Volunteer

Testimony Before Oregon Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Subcommittee On Natural Resources

March 22, 2023

**Subject: SB 5509 - Relating to the financial administration of the State
Department of Fish and Wildlife (Budget)**

Co-Chairs Senator Dembrow and Representative Pham

My name is David Wiley. I live in Sublimity, Oregon. I am a member of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) and a Lead Volunteer for the Elk Foundation in Oregon. Today I am speaking to you on behalf of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

The RMEF is a national non-profit hunter sponsored conservation organization whose mission is to ensure the future of elk, other wildlife, their habitat, and our hunting heritage. We represent more than 225,000 members nationwide and more than 14,000 in Oregon. Since 1991 within Oregon, RMEF and its partners have completed more than 1,034 conservation and hunting heritage projects in the state, enhancing over 865,647 acres, and improved recreational access to 139,655 acres.

RMEF is very pleased to note SB 5509 provides:

- Sufficient funding limitation to complete purchase of Phase II land acquisition to the Minam Wildlife Area with federal funding
- Funds the much-needed Mule Deer Coordinator position.
- Funds the Coquille Wildlife Area Manager position.
- Funds Farm Bill Biologists, 3 positions – Lottery 20% match for federal funding at 80%.

RMEF fully supports SB 5509. However, RMEF requests the Subcommittee restore, add back, two POPs contained in ODFW's agency request budget, prior to giving its approval and passage out of subcommittee.

RMEF believes the two POPS, 108 and 115, which are not included in the SB 5509 (ODFW budget) are critical for the enhancement of wildlife and protection of the states deer and elk from fatal disease as required by ORS 496.012 Wildlife Policy.



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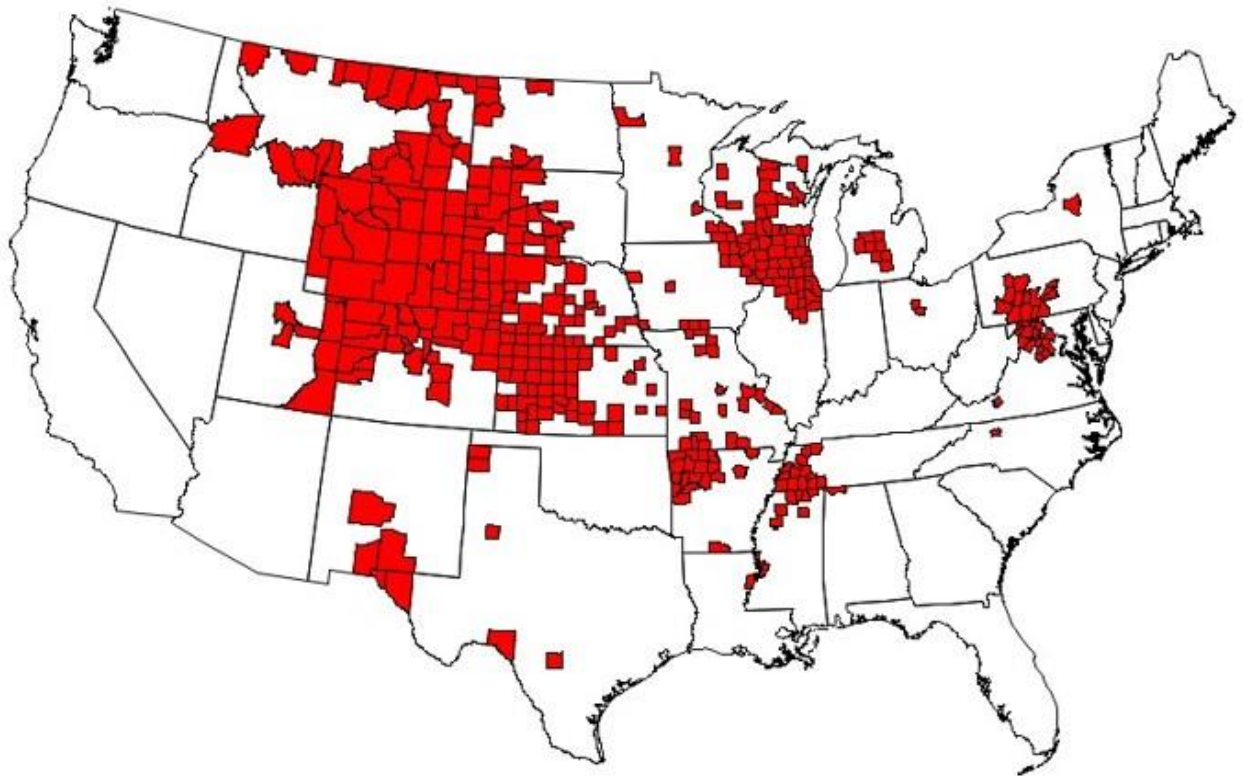
- POP 108 - Good Neighbor Authority Coordinators, 5 Positions - GF 33% match for federal 66%. These positions are essential for the function of the newly authorized ODFW Habitat Division. These positions administer federally funded wildlife habitat improvement work on federal lands at the request of the federal agencies.
- POP 115 - Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Surveillance and Testing, 7 position - \$1.2Million GF, \$98,000 License, and\$ \$434,000 Federal. CWD is a horrible and fatal disease which attacks the nervous system of animals of the deer family which also includes elk and moose. There is no treatment for the disease. The disease is found in 29 states, including Idaho, and 2 Canadian provinces. CWD is not known to be present in Oregon. We need to keep it out. There is a backstop - HB 2532A which is currently before this subcommittee, is comparable POP 115 and provides funding to ODFW and to the OSU-Vet Lab for testing support.

Please consider adding back Pops 108 and 115.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Are there any questions?



Chronic Wasting Disease Among Free-Ranging Cervids by County, United States, June 2022



As of June 2022, there were 391 counties in 29 states with reported CWD in free-ranging cervids. *This map is based on the best-available information from multiple sources, including state wildlife agencies and the United States Geological Survey (USGS).*