

HB 2829: Creating the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund

Background Details

Oregon's 80th Legislative Assembly passed HB 2829 and Governor Kate Brown signed it in to law on July 16, 2019.

Oregonians have a long history of conservation leadership. From the earliest days of statehood, we've tried to balance the use and the protection of our natural resources. Thanks to the foresight, passion and commitment of previous generations, Oregon remains a place of incredible beauty and tremendous recreational opportunity. We owe it to future generations to continue that tradition. *The Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund is an opportunity for all Oregonians to invest in a 21st century approach to conserving our living natural resources for present and future generations.*



House Bill 2829:

1. Creates the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund
 - Directs ODFW to use the fund to carry out activities that serve to protect, maintain or enhance fish and wildlife resources in Oregon
 - Allows the fund to consist of moneys appropriated to ODFW by the legislature and gifts, grants, contributions or other donations
2. Establishes the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Advisory Committee
 - The committee will advise ODFW and the Fish and Wildlife Commission regarding use of the Fund
 - Membership number and geographic representation determined by the commission
 - Members appointed by the governor
3. Appropriates \$1 million to the OCRF after the Department deposits at least \$1 million from non-state and non-federal sources in the Fund
4. Sunsets the Fund and Advisory Committee on January 2, 2022.

According to H.B. 2829, the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund is dedicated to:

- Conserving and protecting Oregon's native wildlife through implementation of the Oregon Conservation and Nearshore Strategies.
- Expanding outdoor recreation opportunities consistent with healthy fish, wildlife, and their habitats.
- Investing in science and research to increase our understanding of the natural world to make sound, informed decisions regarding fish, wildlife and habitat.
- Restoring healthy ecosystems to benefit Oregon's fish and wildlife and improve the health of our environment for future generations.

ODFW's Highest Priority Actions

Habitat restoration to improve habitat connectivity for fish and wildlife

Science and research to inform management of Strategy Species and habitats

Connecting Oregonians to the outdoors

- Connecting youth, families, diverse and underserved communities to the outdoors.
- Helping all Oregonians take voluntary, proactive steps to conserve and protect fish, wildlife and habitat for future generations.
- Improving fishing and hunting and reducing license fees that currently fund most conservation efforts.
- Recognizing Oregon’s diversity by encouraging all Oregonians to enjoy our rich outdoor heritage.



The Conservation and Recreation Fund Concept

A diverse group of Oregonians worked on a legislatively appointed task force in 2015 to identify solutions to ensure that our children and grandchildren can experience the clean, clear rivers, deep forests, high desert sagebrush, dramatic coastlines, and the outdoor recreation and abundant fish and wildlife that we enjoy today. The Task Force reviewed approaches in other states, explored ways to leverage current funding, and identified creation of the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund as a critical first step. [Read the Task Force Report](#)

The Conservation and Recreation Connection – Investing in Our Future

Oregon’s fish and wildlife rely on the same lands and waters as Oregon’s outdoor recreation community. To date, conservation and management of fish, wildlife and their habitats have been funded primarily through the sale of hunting and fishing licenses and associated federal excise taxes. Participation in hunting and fishing, both nationally and in Oregon, has declined over time. Even when hunting and fishing have been stable, fee payers continued to be asked, through fee increases, to shoulder costs tied to a management regime that is increasingly complex due to today’s legal requirements, overlapping jurisdictions, and changing public demands and engagement with nature.

Meanwhile, public attitudes, uses and demands related to the recreational and aesthetic value of fish, wildlife and habitat have changed, reflecting increased needs and public expectations around conservation, recreation, and education.

At the same time, society is becoming disconnected from the natural world. This lack of connection with nature profoundly affects public health, our well-being, and the future of fish and wildlife in Oregon.

How to contribute

- Direct donation online
- Direct donation by check
- Generate ideas for investments
- Solicit donations from other donors



ODFW Intends to Engage Oregonians to Implement the Oregon Conservation and Nearshore Strategy

The Oregon Conservation and Nearshore Strategy is a comprehensive, science-based plan that helps government agencies, landowners, conservation groups, hunting and fishing organizations and other partners coordinate their efforts to improve fish, wildlife and their habitats in Oregon’s terrestrial, aquatic and nearshore ecosystems. The goals of the Conservation Strategy are to maintain healthy fish and wildlife populations by maintaining and restoring functioning habitats, preventing declines of at-risk species, and reversing declines in these resources where possible.

The Conservation Strategy emphasizes proactively conserving declining species and habitats to reduce the possibility of future federal or state listings. It is not a regulatory document but instead presents issues, opportunities, and recommended voluntary actions that will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of conservation in Oregon.