



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

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ODFW Support for Rogue River Restoration proposal

1. ODFW support

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife supports the projects listed below and efforts to fund these projects. ODFW will gladly collaborate in the effort to complete the list of projects as funding allows, or help to prioritize the list if partial funding is available.

2. Background Rogue Watershed

In most years the Rogue River is the largest producer of salmon and steelhead among coastal watersheds in Oregon. Chinook salmon produced in the Rogue rear in the ocean off Oregon and California, adding to the importance of these fish for commercial and sport fisheries in the ocean. In the river, anglers fish for salmon and steelhead on 157 miles of the Rogue, and for steelhead on the Applegate and Illinoia rivers.

An economic study on fishing, hunting and wildlife viewing in Oregon was completed in 2008. Freshwater fishing provided significant benefits to the local economy despite Rogue runs being generally down that year. Total travel-related spending by Oregon residents and non-residents during freshwater fishing in 2008 totaled \$8,520,000 in Jackson County, \$3,432,000 in Josephine County and \$4,452,000 in Curry County (Dean Runyan Associates, May 2009).

Unique among federal dam projects in the Pacific Northwest, dams on the Rogue constructed and operated by the US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) were authorized by Congress with Fishery Enhancement as a primary purpose. In addition, Cole Rivers Hatchery was constructed to produce fish to mitigate for production lost due to habitat that was blocked by dam construction. When the Corps decided to drop construction of a fish ladder at Applegate Dam, hatchery production was increased to compensate for additional lost habitat. Hatchery production was decreased when construction of the third dam in the Rogue Basin Project (Elk Creek Dam) was stopped. The importance of Rogue fish was acknowledged in the Corps report submitted as part of House Document 566 in 1962 that authorized dam construction in the watershed. The Rogue was called "...nationally famous, and internationally known, for its anadromous and resident fishery resources".

3. Corps funding; Cole Rivers Hatchery Deferred Maintenance Needs

Supporting Document: A final report from Corps engineers is expected February 2019.

Corps engineers reviewed the infrastructure at Cole Rivers Hatchery on February 6-8, 2019. The review team identified several significant deferred maintenance issues such as leaking roofs, failing pipeline valves, upgrading safety features for fire suppression, electrical service, and rails. They also noted that the Life Support System (LSS) for early incubation and early rearing was contaminated with bacteria, and supported ODFW action to decommission a portion of the LSS due to contamination.

ODFW is requesting that the Corps fund repairs at the hatchery. First is a request for an engineered redesign and construction of a new LSS. This is needed to ensure that the Corps provides the hatchery with sufficient water quantity and quality to meet fish culture requirements and mitigation goals. Second is a request for the funds required to address several significant deferred maintenance issues identified in the Corps facility review and final report. Addressing these deficiencies will cost several million dollars.

Corps funding

4. Corps funding; Spawning gravel replenishment below Lost Creek

Supporting Documents: Rogue Spring Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan (2007); Rogue Spring Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan Comprehensive Assessment and Update (2019)

In the Rogue Spring Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan adopted in 2007, ODFW requested the Corps restore and maintain spawning habitat for spring Chinook between Lost Creek Reservoir and Shady Cove (management action 9.1.8). In our recently completed assessment and update of the Plan, we state that ODFW will request the Corps begin gravel replenishment. The Corps will need funding to develop and implement a plan to restore and maintain spawning gravel below the dam. ODFW recommends that plan development begin in 2019.

Corps funding

5. NOAA Restoration Center (Portland) funding; Fish passage restoration in Rogue watershed

Supporting Document: 2019 ODFW Fish Passage Priority List

Fish passage barriers are a significant impact to salmon and steelhead in the Rogue Basin. Momentum for restoration of fish passage in the Rogue watershed has grown significantly in the last 10-15 years. Since 2005 at least 21 dams were removed, and passage has been greatly improved at a minimum of 14 additional barriers. The work was highlighted by the removal or notching of three older dams from the mainstem Rogue: Gold Hill Dam 2008; Savage Rapids Dam 2009; Gold Ray Dam 2010. ODFW has summarized observations of fish response to barrier removal on the Rogue (attached).

Restoration work continues through the collective effort of agencies, watershed councils, tribes, local sporting groups, and other non-governmental organizations. Funding assistance is needed to continue progress. Funding for the removal of barriers or improvement of passage at 25 sites over the next five to ten years will contribute significantly to additional natural production of salmon and steelhead. The work could cost \$4-6 million.

Cumulative match could rely on annual OWEB, or some other source of state funding in the Rogue watershed; likely \$600,000 per year

6. General Restoration Big Butte

Supporting Documents: Rogue Spring Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan (2007); Rogue Spring Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan Comprehensive Assessment and Update (2019); Rogue Coho Strategic Action Plan (in progress)

Significant opportunities for additional fish production are present in Big Butte:

5a. Flow restoration alternatives:

- Purchases, leases, projects to ensure minimum amount of cold ambient streamflow of 80 cubic feet per second (cfs) at mouth year-round (draft objective in Rogue Coho Strategic Action Plan).
- Work with Eagle Point Irrigation District (EPID) to do acquire water mid-September through mid-October to increase spring Chinook passage and spawning upstream of Crowfoot Falls.

5b. Fish passage restoration alternatives:

- Improve fish ladder at Crowfoot Falls at river mile 0.7.
- Improve passage at EPID diversion dam

5c. Place spawning gravel at strategic locations on mainstem Big Butte Creek between Crowfoot Falls and Butte Falls. May also include placement of large woody debris. Gravel will be used by spring Chinook and Coho salmon.

Cumulative match could rely on annual OWEB, or some other source of state funding in the Rogue watershed; likely \$600,000 per year

7. General Restoration Elk Creek

Supporting Document: Rogue Coho Strategic Action Plan (in progress)

Significant opportunities for additional production are present in Elk Creek:

6a. Fund implementation of actions in restoration plans

- Implement restoration projects identified in Rogue Coho Strategic Action Plan (in progress); includes instream flow and riparian protection/restoration
- Implement restoration projects identified in US Forest Service restoration plan

6b. Restore floodplain connectivity throughout USACE land on mainstem Elk Creek.

6c. Revegetate valley bottom throughout USACE land on mainstem Elk Creek.

Cumulative match could rely on annual OWEB, or some other source of state funding in the Rogue watershed; likely \$600,000 per year

8. General Restoration Little Butte

Supporting Document: Rogue Spring Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan (2007); Rogue Spring Chinook Salmon Comprehensive Assessment and Update (2019); Rogue Coho Strategic Action Plan (in progress)

Significant opportunities for additional production are present in Little Butte Creek:

- 7a. Fund implementation of actions in Rogue Coho Strategic Action Plan (in progress); includes instream flow and riparian protection/restoration
- 7b. Restore or improve fish passage at 10 additional barriers in Little Butte Creek
- 7c. Fund actions in Eagle Point's Little Butte Water Quality Implementation Plan
- 7d. Fund Bureau of Reclamation employee to operate Antelope Creek fish ladder; ensure safe operation for fish and use of site for fish monitoring in perpetuity

Cumulative match could rely on annual OWEB, or some other source of state funding in the Rogue watershed; likely \$600,000 per year

9. General Restoration Bear Creek

Supporting Document: 2019 ODFW Fish Passage Priority List; Bear Creek Watershed TMDL (DEQ)

Significant opportunities for additional production are present in Bear Creek:

- 8a. Restore or improve fish passage at 10 additional barriers in Bear Creek.
- 8b. Fund water quality monitoring and repeat of ODFW fish habitat survey
- 8c. Purchase or lease water for instream use
- 8c. Fund study of potential to restore steelhead production above Emigrant Lake

Cumulative match could rely on annual OWEB, or some other source of state funding in the Rogue watershed; likely \$600,000 per year

10. Fund ODFW habitat restoration biologist(s)

Biologist(s) will design, implement and help others implement restoration projects to produce more fish, with a focus on spring Chinook and Coho salmon. Biologist(s) will also monitor fish populations in target tributaries to evaluate success. Requires approximately \$110,000 per year per position for personal services and supplies.

Cumulative match could rely on annual OWEB, or some other source of state funding in the Rogue watershed; likely \$600,000 per year

ODFW and the Rogue Watershed appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on this initiative and looks forward to collaborating with the public and private partners in moving this to implementation.

Sincerely,



Dan Van Dyke
ODFW Rogue District Fish Biologist