



**OREGON CHAPTER
OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**

PO Box 2378
Corvallis, OR 97339

DATE: 12/10/2019

FROM: **Oregon Chapter of the Wildlife Society**

SUBJECT: **ODFW Climate and Ocean Change Policy**

TO: **Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife**

The Oregon Chapter of the Wildlife Society (ORTWS) is writing to provide our strong support for ODFW's 2019 Climate and Ocean Change Policy Draft. With the unprecedented threats predicted with climate and ocean change, this document builds an essential foundation to sustain Oregon's fish and wildlife heritage for future generations. We commend ODFW for being the nation's leader on drafting policy that will start to address the challenges faced by these changes.

The Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society (ORTWS), represents over 500 professionals, including scientists, managers, educators, technicians, planners, consultants, conservation officers, students and others who manage, conserve, and study wildlife populations and habitat. Our mission is to promote scientifically based conservation and management of wildlife resources in Oregon by serving and representing natural resource professionals.

Like many other state natural resource agencies, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) contends with an enormous trust responsibility to manage fish and wildlife and their habitats across private, state, and federal ownership boundaries. The 2019 Climate and Ocean Change Policy Draft is an important policy for mitigating the effects of climate and ocean change on Oregon's wildlife and associated habitats. ORTWS is in agreement with most of the DRAFT but encourages ODFW to carefully consider the following issues:

1. **Lacking recommendations for migrating species that have seasonal habitat in Oregon.** Many migrating species are very sensitive to environmental changes and are already being affected by climate change. Increasing temperatures, changing habitat and extreme weather conditions lead to significant changes of essential habitat that migrating species rely on to provide food and resting places during migration. Additionally, species that are only seasonal residents may become permanent. We suggest providing some guidance for these species as well.
2. **Departmental Climate and Ocean Change Response Key Principles (8).**
 - a. Please define "high-level of certainty in the sentence "When faced with a high level of certainty that a naturally-produced, native species will be unable to persist . . ."
 - b. Remove or reword "local extirpation" from the sentence that reads "management goals and strategies may allow for assisted range shift, local extirpation or other modification of the conservation approach as long as long-term persistence of a species is likely

elsewhere in the range”. Local extirpation should be avoided at all costs as one of the three tenants of ecosystem management is to conserve or restore natural biodiversity. We also suggest that if you retain the wording of “local extirpation” that you add a provision that an analysis of the likelihood of persistence in the remaining of the range of the species be conducted prior to making a final decision on local extirpation.

Consistent, science-based management is at the core of retaining wildlife populations in Oregon faced with the threat of climate and ocean change. The 2019 Climate and Ocean Change Policy Draft sets a good foundation to address the issues that may arise from climate change. ORTWS endorses this draft and looks forward to commenting on future versions.

Regards,

ORTWS Board of Directors