R & E Grant Application 25-27 Biennium

Project #: 25-016

East Side Electrofishing Boat

Project Information

Requested Cycle:	25-2
R&E Project Request:	$146,000
Other Funding:	$13,668
Total Project:	$159,668
Spending Start Date:	7/1/2025
Spending End Date:	6/30/2027
Project Start Date:	7/1/2025
Project End Date:	1/31/2027
Organization:	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Applicant Information

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Past Recommended or Completed Projects

This applicant has no previous projects that match criteria.

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Location Information

Where is it?

The project will occur Statewide

Project Summary

Project Summary

Please provide a couple sentence summary of the proposal.

The purchase of a fully functional and equipped electrofishing boat for use within the East Region primarily and statewide secondarily.

Overall Project Goals

Describe the primary goals or outcomes of the entire project, including elements not requesting funding from R&E.

The goal of this project is to provide the needed tools for East Region Fish Districts to monitor lake, reservoir and pond population dynamics and stock recruitment for warm and coldwater fishes and fisheries. This data can be used to establish baseline information should aquatic invasive species become established.

Primary objectives of R&E funding

Please describe the measurable objectives for the R&E portion of the funding request.

The purchase of a fully functional and equipped electrofishing boat package that will include the boat, trailer, positive/negative electrodes, control box, generator, tank for holding captured fish, safety gear (e.g. life vest, gloves) for use in East Region, primarily.

Current Situation/Justification

Please describe the current situation and explain why this funding is needed.

No electrofishing boat for dedicated use by East Region Fish Biologists exists leading to a lack of monitoring of warmwater fisheries. The lack of ODFW capacity due to reduction in warmwater program staffing has led some Fish Districts to monitor their warmwater fisheries in the East Region while others have no monitoring currently. The lack of monitoring of these fisheries results in lack of information for biologists and anglers.

An electrofishing boat is available for use at the ODFW Roseburg Office and some Fish Districts dedicated time to monitor their warmwater fisheries beginning in 2017 spending time and money on travel and maintenance. This was manageable until demand for the electrofishing boat increased from multiple Districts throughout the state. Currently four East Region and one West Region Fish Districts have needs for this boat.

Other alternatives to purchasing a new electrofishing boat were considered, namely, the feasibility and functionality of retrofitting and existing ODFW boat to an electrofishing boat. This option was eliminated because costs associated with modification and purchase of the electrofishing system approached the cost of a fully functional new electrofishing boat and concerns about safety/functionality following a retrofit. It would be used to address invasive species issues.

Recreation and Commercial Benefit

This project will provide benefits to:

Recreational fisheries

Explain how this project will contribute to current (and/or potential) fishing opportunities, access, or fisheries management.

Boat electrofishing is a common way to sample lakes, reservoirs, ponds and large rivers for warmwater fishes. The equipment allows fisheries managers to efficiently sample these waterbodies within hours verses multiple trips over one to several days. Fisheries managers collect length, weight, age and sometimes disease information. This data is analyzed to provide population information such as size classes, growth, cohort recruitment, age structure, survival, mortality and biomass of fishes within a waterbody.

The interpreted analysis is used to provide current information to anglers utilizing the fisheries and provides baseline warmwater species information. One third of anglers in Oregon fish for warmwater species (ODFW 2023) at large reservoirs. Angling hours on Brownlee Reservoir increased eight-fold from 1970 to 2000. Monitoring at Owyhee Reservoir recorded 36,778 1992 during the last creel survey.

ODFW staff have used boat electrofishing to monitor waterbodies that have benefit for coldwater species. Beulah Reservoir in Malheur County is utilized by Bull Trout to overwinter when the rely on minnow species as prey during this time. ODFW and USGS monitor a Largemouth Bass population to ensure they aren't affecting Bull Trout or the prey base rely on. Data from sampling can establish baselines for AIS monitoring.

Percent benefit split between Commercial and Recreational anglers:

0 % Commercial

100 % Recreational

Please explain, or justify, how the percentage split was determined:

This equipment is used to sample recreational fisheries, primarily warmwater fisheries. However, it can be used to monitor coldwater fisheries too for similar desired population data. It can also be used to establish baseline data on warm and coldwater fisheries that can inform the effects of illegally introduced species or aquatic invasive species (e.g. quagga mussels).

This project has been identified as an ODFW priority for:

Local/watershed

Basin/regional

Statewide

Does this project directly support implementation of the ODFW Strategic Plan and/or current Fish Division priorities?

Yes

The purchase of the electrofishing boat helps East Region Fisheries Managers "enhance our ability to meet management needs"; one of the goals identified by Fish Division for the 2023-2025. Enhancement comes through improving the size/pounds of fish targeted by anglers and by baseline data and knowledge gained by fisheries managers.

Please briefly explain when this was identified as a priority and what process or workgroup was used to identified this as an ODFW priority.

Fish Division goal identified for the 23-25 Biennium. The ODFW goals for the Department or

Fish Division for the 25-27 Biennium weren't available at the time the grant was submitted.

Identify any plan or other document that identifies this priority.

25-Year Recreational Angling Enhancement Plan

Warmwater Fish Management Plan

Basin Plans - Malheur, Deschutes, La Grande, Umatilla, Klamath, Mid-Columbia, John Day, Wallowa

Is this project part of an approved Salmon-Trout Enhancement Program (STEP) activity?

No

This project is intended to benefit the following species:

Largemouth Bass
Smallmouth Bass
Yellow Perch
Other Fish Species
Black Crappie, White Crappie, Channel Catfish, Flathead Catfish, Bull Trout
Rainbow Trout

This project will benefit anglers or fishery by providing:

Monitoring/Research

Monitoring/Research

This project will be used to evaluate:

Population composition (i.e age, species, survival, size, or genetics)
Distribution (i.e. presence, abscence, abundance)

Has this project been reviewed or developed by an individual with appropriate qualifications (i.e ODFW biometrician, research professor)?

Yes

Fisheries biologists with years of education and experience in analysis of population dynamics and trends are designing and implementing monitoring/research projects using electrofishing boats on lakes, reservoirs and ponds and appropriate large rivers. East Region fisheries biologists consulted with Fish Division staff prior to pursing this funding.

Is this study critical to fishery management decisions?

Yes

What is the status of warmwater and coldwater fish populations in East Region reservoirs, lakes and ponds? Information about warmwater and coldwater fisheries population status such as average size, recruitment, size structure, survival and mortality that are currently lacking for many East Region waterbodies. Fisheries managers use this information to monitor these fisheries, to consider adding or removing regulations and to provide information to interested anglers. This information can also be used to consider how infrastructure such as hydropower or irrigation operations may be affecting fish populations within these reservoirs and open dialogues with managing entities.

Yes

The results from sampling can be used to modify regulations, capture and mark fish to understand movement and angler catch and harvest, or to implement actions to improve fisheries through transfer of excess fish species from one waterbody to other appropriate waterbodies or pursing piscicide projects to remove unwanted fish species. The effects of

hydropower and irrigation management on fish species can be documented leading to conversations with managers and potential changes to improve fisheries.

Is there a plan to repeat this monitoring or research in the future?

Yes

The purchase of the electrofishing boat will allow fisheries managers in East Region primarily and statewide secondarily to evaluate and manage lake, reservoir and pond fisheries and appropriate large rivers for decades into the future.

Will the data be reported or published?

No

Project Description

Schedule

Activity	Date	RE Funding
Identify desired specifications and select a boat for an electrofishing boat primarily located and used in the East Region	5/2025	No
Submit order to Midwest Lake Electrofishing Systems Inc. (all have sole source letters) for electrofishing boat (12-14 month build timetable)	1/2026	Yes
Receive electrofishing boat (12-14 month build timetable) from vendor.	3/2027	No

Permits

Permit	Secured?	Date Expected
None needed.	No	

Project Design and Description

Please describe in detail the methods or approach that will be used to achieve the project objectives.

Purchase a 20' fully functional electrofishing boat from Midwest Lake Electrofishing Systems. A fully functional boat will include: the boat, motor, electrofishing controller, electrofishing booms with arrays (wires), large live well for holding fish during sampling, gas tank, storage, dip nets, appropriate safety equipment (e.g. life vests, electrofishing gloves) and appropriate tool/diagnostic/maintenance kit. The safety and tools etc. will stay with the boat. The boat will be picked up by ODFW staff from the vendor. Training for ODFW staff on the use of the equipment will be included in the funding request.

Engineering

Does the project involve capital improvement, engineering, site grading or other construction?

No

Project Management and Maintenance

What is the life expectancy of R&E funded construction, structures, equipment, supplies, data or fishery?

Maintenance will be done by East Region Fish Districts using the electrofishing boat. Appropriate maintenance will be done by professionals. Warranties will be used when they are in force. The costs for maintenance will be shared by Districts using the boat. The life expectancy of the boat is 20+ years.

Who is responsible for long term management, maintenance, and oversight of the project beyond what is funded by R&E.

This question is suited to one-off projects, but the previous response is appropriate for this

question too: Minor and major maintenance will be done by East Region Fish Districts using the electrofishing boat. Appropriate maintenance (e.g. outboard motor, electrofishing components) will be done by professionals. Warranties will be used when they are in force. The costs for maintenance will be shared by Districts using the boat.

Will the project require ongoing maintenance?

Yes

It's a boat that is driven close to shore with constant forward, neutral and reverse of the throttle, steering/maneuvering and hauled throughout the East Region and beyond. There are bound to be mechanical and electrofishing maintenance issues that will need to be addressed over the life of the equipment. District staff will address minor issues while major issues (e.g. outboard or electrofishing components) will be sent to professionals. Warranties will be used when in force.

Is there a plan to collect baseline data and to conduct monitoring efforts to measure the effectiveness of the project?

No

Project Funding

Funding

Have you applied for OWEB funding for this project?

No

Has this proposal, or similar proposal for this project location, previously been denied by OWEB or other funding source?

No

Other Funding Source	Type	Secured	Dollar Value	Comments
ODFW East Region	Cash	Secured	5,000	
ODFW East Region Fish Districts	Cash	Secured	2,091	Safety equipment, life vests, tools, dipnets,
Travel to pickup the boat	In-Kind	Secured	6,577	Staff time, lodging, per diem, motor pool, mileage
		Total	13,668	

Budget

Item	Unit Number	Unit Cost	In-kind or non-cash contributions	Funding from other sources	R&E Funds	Total Costs
PROJECT MANAGEMENT						
		SUBTOTAL				
IN-HOUSE PERSONNEL						
Dave Banks	40	86	3,426			3,426
		SUBTOTAL	3,426			3,426
CONTRACTED SERVICES						
		SUBTOTAL				
TRAVEL						
Lodging	3	120	360			360
Per diem	4	60	240			240
Motorpool	4	70	280			280
Mileage	3,208	1	2,246			2,246
Lodging	1	25	25			25
		SUBTOTAL	3,151			3,151
SUPPLIES/MATERIALS						
		SUBTOTAL				
EDUCATION/OUTREACH						
Electrofishing boat training by MLES staff for OR fish biologist					4,500	4,500
		SUBTOTAL			4,500	4,500
EQUIPMENT						
Midwest Lakes Electrofishing System boat & electrofishing equipment	1			5,000	115,900	120,900
Dip net package	1	995		995		995
Electrofishing gloves	4	94		376		376
Tools/diagnostics	1	200		200		200
Custom boat trailer	1	4,000			4,000	4,000
Outboard motor 175 hp 4 stroke	1	21,600			21,600	21,600
Life vests	4	130		520		520
		SUBTOTAL		7,091	141,500	148,591
FISCAL ADMINISTRATION						
		SUBTOTAL				
		BUDGET TOTAL	6,577	7,091	146,000	159,668

Internal Review Results

Review Score: 4.1 out of 5

(1 = Do Not Fund, 2 = Strengthen Proposal, 3 = Recommend with Conditions, 4 = Recommend, 5 = Strongly Recommend)

Specific Review Team Questions

Please explain the choice for a 175hp motor. Can you go with a slightly smaller motor to save some cost? Would a 150hp motor be adequate, or do you need the 175hp motor as outlined in the application?

While a slightly smaller motor will save money in the short-term, a larger 175hp motor will likely save money in the long term. The East Region contains multiple large reservoirs (e.g., Brownlee and Owyhee) which exceed 50 miles in length. To ensure that sampling remains unbiased, sites around the entire waterbody are typically required. By reducing the motor's hp, we lengthen already long boat rides, and risk increasing the number of sampling days required. Additionally an undersized motor will be strained, which will likely reduce the life expectancy of the motor.

Where will this boat be stored, and will there be a single office that will be responsible for scheduling use of the boat between districts?

This boat will be stored at the East Region office in La Grande, OR. East Region fisheries managers will work together to schedule use of the boat to meet everyone's needs. The benefit of having an East Region boat is there will be less demand during peak sampling season (spring and summer) as there will now be another boat. Scheduling and being able to use an electrofishing boat has been a problem because there is no dedicated East Region boat. The East Region fisheries managers plan to have a meeting before each sampling season to determine the most effective and efficient use of the boat that meets everyone's needs. Additionally, any other fisheries biologists across the state that are interested in using the boat will also be able to schedule time to use the boat for their fisheries sampling needs.

Will this electrofishing boat provide a direct benefit to the angler? Please explain.

Yes, a dedicated East Region electrofishing boat will provide a direct benefit to anglers in multiple ways. First, it would significantly enhance fisheries monitoring, allowing district biologists to make more informed management decisions. This includes optimizing fish stocking efforts and habitat improvement projects that directly support healthy populations of angler-targeted species.

Second, data from electrofishing surveys will support better regulation and season-setting, ensuring that bag limits, size limits, and other rules align with current conditions and maximize angler opportunity.

Additionally, increased monitoring will allow for earlier detection of invasive species and faster response times. Timely responses are critical for preventing invasive species from establishing. By reducing the likelihood of invasive species establishing, we bolster the long-term health of the State's fisheries.

Additional Files

Budget Information

Quote	*Midwest Lake Electrofishing Systems quote 7/16/2025*

Maps

Photos

MLES e-fishing boat 1	*16' w/ removable live well*
MLES e-fishing boat 3	*Center console*
MLES e-fishing boat 4	*sideview*

Design Information

Management Plans and Supporting Documents

Permits and Reviews

Partnerships

Public Comment

Letter of Support	*Support Letter*

Administrative Documents

Signature Page	*Signature Page*

Completion Report

A completion report has not been submitted for this project.