R & E Grant Application 25-27 Biennium

Project #: 25-035

North Willamette Channel Catfish Stocking

Project Information

Requested Cycle:	25-4
R&E Project Request:	$5,000
Other Funding:	$2,500
Total Project:	$7,500
Spending Start Date:	7/1/2025
Spending End Date:	6/30/2027
Project Start Date:	6/9/2027
Project End Date:	6/10/2027
Organization:	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Applicant Information

Name:	Kevin Stertz
Address:	17330 SE Evelyn Street Clackamas, OR 97015
Telephone:	971-673-6044
Email:	kevin.a.stertz@odfw.oregon.gov

Past Recommended or Completed Projects

This applicant has no previous projects that match criteria.

Authorized Agent

Name:	Ben Walczak
Address:	17330 Se Evelyn St Clackamas, OR 97015
Telephone:	971-673-6011
Email:	ben.walczak@odfw.oregon.gov

Location Information

Where is it?

The project will occur on public land owned or managed by the applicant

Site Description

Street Address, nearest intersection, or other descriptive location.

St. Louis Ponds, Hartman Pond, Blue Lake, other popular valley ponds.

Directions to the site from the nearest highway junction.

All sites are located between Salem and Portland relatively close to I-5.

Following project completion, public anglers will be allowed the following level of access to the project site:

Full access

Please describe what leases, easements, agreements are in place to ensure angler access to the project site, and what is the length of each agreement.

The ponds that we will stock we own and manage, and/or manage the fisheries which all have public access.

Dominant Land Use Type:

Urban residential
Rural residential

Project Location

General Project Location.

County:	Marion, Clackamas, Multnomah.
ODFW Dist:	North Willamette
Tributary of:	N/A

Specific Project Location.

Latitude	Longitude

Project Summary

Project Summary

Please provide a couple sentence summary of the proposal.

ODFW will purchase channel catfish from a proven partner to stock popular valley ponds in the Willamette Valley to promote a unique and popular opportunity in the warmer months of the year when trout are not a viable option.

Overall Project Goals

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

This project will purchase and stock 1,000 quality size channel catfish (averaging ~ 1 lb. each) into popular public ponds in the North Willamette Watershed District. The stocking will enhance warmwater recreational opportunities, improve catch rates for families and novice anglers, and

increase participation in accessible local waters.

Primary objectives of R&E funding

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

In response to numerous angler requests, we will stock quality-size channel catfish into popular public ponds in the North Willamette Watershed District in June 2027. This will boost angling opportunities and satisfaction.

Current Situation/Justification

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

Currently, ODFW lacks the capacity to rear channel catfish to quality size in sufficient numbers on a consistent basis. Channel catfish are highly popular with both urban and rural anglers in the North Willamette Watershed and frequently requested by constituents. This funding will enable us to stock 1,000 quality size channel catfish in June 2027 into popular public ponds. This project directly benefits recreational anglers by providing a productive warmwater fishery during summer months when trout options are limited, enhancing angling opportunities and satisfaction for families, youth, and novice anglers across diverse communities.

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.

This project will enhance recreational fishing opportunities in the North Willamette Watershed District by stocking quality-size channel catfish into popular public ponds. Channel catfish provide a productive warmwater fishery that complements existing species such as largemouth bass, bluegill, and crappie, offering reliable angling during warmer months when trout are not available. Anglers, including families, youth, and novice participants from urban and rural areas, have made numerous requests for additional channel catfish stockings. These fish are prized because they make excellent table fare, fight hard on light tackle, and do not require fancy equipment making them ideal for bank anglers and beginners. Stocking at quality size will deliver immediate improvements in catch rates and angler satisfaction, increasing pond usage and overall recreational access at easily reachable public sites. This effort supports ODFW fisheries management goals by expanding warmwater angling opportunities, promoting equitable access for diverse communities. It also provides valuable data and public support that can inform future hatchery operations for this popular species. Expected outcomes include sustained or increased fishing pressure and positive feedback from constituents.

Percent benefit split between Commercial and Recreational anglers:

0 % Commercial
100 % Recreational

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

The ponds we are stocking are inland freshwater ponds which only provide recreational access.

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

This project directly supports ODFW's Strategic Plan and Fish Division priorities by enhancing recreational fish opportunities and access. It advances the "Everyone Belongs Outdoors" Portland pilot by providing accessible warmwater angling for diverse urban communities, supports R3 (Recruitment, Retention, reactivation) efforts, and meets strong public demand for channel catfish.

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

This channel catfish stocking project was identified as a priority through ongoing public angler requests and district-level warmwater fisheries planning in the North Willamette Watershed. It aligns with ODFW Fish Division priorities and the Everyone Belongs Outdoors initiative, as reflected in constituent feedback and annual management processes.

Identify any plan or other document that identifies this priority.

ODFW Warmwater Gamefish Management Plan.

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

No

This project is intended to benefit the following species:

This project will benefit anglers or fishery by providing:

Angling Opportunity

Angling Opportunity

This project will:

Improve the opportunity for anglers to catch fish (better stocked fish, trapping)

Provide new opportunity for anglers to catch fish (new pond, more fish to stock more areas, new species)

Enhance natural production of fish stocks to levels that allow for recreational fishing opportunities

Restore a degraded fishery

Project Description

Schedule

Activity	Date	RE Funding
Pick up fish from Supplier	6/9/2027	Yes

Permits

Permit	Secured?	Date Expected
Fish Transport Permit issued by ODFW	No	5/15/2027

Project Design and Description

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

The project will use standard ODFW warmwater fish stocking procedures. Channel catfish will be purchased from an approved private hatchery supplier and transported/stocked by district

staff in selected ponds in June 2027.Stocking will follow ODFW fish health and transport protocols to ensure high survival and minimal stress. Post stocking monitoring will include visual observations and angler feedback. Site selection prioritizes high use, accessible ponds with suitable warmwater habitat. No in-water construction or habitat alteration is required.

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?

This fish stocking project includes no R&E-funded construction, structures, or equipment. The stocked channel catfish will provide direct benefit to anglers by enhancing the warmwater fishery, delivering recreational benefits for multiple years, typically 8-15 or more based on lifespan and growth in Oregon ponds.

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

North Willamette District Fish Biologists.

Will the project require ongoing maintenance?

No

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

Yes

Baseline conditions will be noted prior to stocking. Post-stocking monitoring will include visual observations of fish presence, angler reports, and increased pond usage to assess catch rates and satisfaction. Simple, low-cost methods will direct benefits to recreational anglers within the first year.

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 North Willamette District	In-Kind	Secured	2,500	Staff time, trucks, fuel, oxygen, water, nets, and fish transport tanks.
		Total	2,500	

Budget

Item	Unit Number	Unit Cost	In-kind or non-cash contributions	Funding from other sources	R&E Funds	Total Costs
PROJECT MANAGEMENT						
Staff time, trucks, fuel, oxygen, water, nets, transport tanks.			2,500			2,500
		SUBTOTAL	2,500			2,500
IN-HOUSE PERSONNEL						
		SUBTOTAL				
CONTRACTED SERVICES						
		SUBTOTAL				
TRAVEL						
		SUBTOTAL				
SUPPLIES/MATERIALS						
channel catfish	1,000	5			5,000	5,000
		SUBTOTAL			5,000	5,000
EDUCATION/OUTREACH						
		SUBTOTAL				
EQUIPMENT						
		SUBTOTAL				
FISCAL ADMINISTRATION						
		SUBTOTAL				
		BUDGET TOTAL	2,500	0	5,000	7,500

Internal Review Results

Review Score: 4.2 out of 5

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

Summary of Review Team Comments

The IRT team gave this project a combined score of 4.2

Specific Review Team Comments

Good Project.

It would be helpful to include a discussion about what measures have been taken to assure that non-native, predatory fish could not enter waterways that support native fish during floods (e.g. locating ponds off the flood plain, etc.)

When spread among three or more ponds it doesn't seem like 1,000 fish will go a long way. Why not purchase more? Also, it seems unlikely these fish would continue to provide benefits for 8-15 years as they are likely to be caught.

Specific Review Team Questions

Can these fish escape into other waterways and what would be the impacts from that to native fish populations?

These are closed, off-channel ponds that sit outside the 100-year floodplain and have no surface connection to streams or rivers that would allow for fish to escape under normal flood conditions. They are managed as isolated recreational opportunities. Channel catfish have been routinely stocked in similar Oregon ponds for many years specifically to provide accessible family and youth fishing opportunities. Because the ponds are hydrologically isolated and outside the floodplain, the risk of escape into native waters is negligible. As a result, there is no anticipated impact to native fish populations in connected waterways.

What would the limits on the catfish be? Would they be harvested quickly and not allowed to produce offspring and then require future restocking by purchasing more fish?

Most of the ponds have a two-fish daily bag limit. Like trout stocking, angler success is highest right after the fish are planted. Over time the fish disperse, and those not caught early continue to grow. Unlike trout, channel catfish survive year-round in these ponds and can contribute to the fishery across multiple seasons. Many of the stocked fish will be harvested over time, while others build a longer-term opportunity. We will track near-term success through angler reports, creel checks, and local feedback, and continue monitoring in subsequent seasons to support ongoing stocking of these waters.

Additional Files

Budget Information

Maps

Photos

14 lb. channel catfish	*14 lb.channel catfish caught at St. Louis Pond 7 in 2026*
8 inch channel catfish	*8 inch channel catfish stocked at St. Louis Pond 7 in 2019*

Design Information

Management Plans and Supporting Documents

Permits and Reviews

Partnerships

Public Comment

OBPC Letter of Support

Administrative Documents

Signature Page	*Signature Page*

Completion Report

A completion report has not been submitted for this project.