



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Fish and Wildlife

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Oregon Water Resources Commission

RE: Agenda Item J Deschutes Basin Groundwater Mitigation Program Five-Year Legislative and Administrative Report

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) would like to reiterate our position that we are strongly opposed to expanding the Deschutes Basin Groundwater Mitigation Program Allocation Cap. Please see Attachments 4 and 20 for our comments on the Program Evaluation.

In their Commission Memorandum for Agenda Item J, and in the Final Draft of the 5-Year Review, OWRD indicate that they are "...planning to begin discussions in 2022 with stakeholders about the possibility of modifying the allocation cap." This timeline is much more aggressive and inconsistent with recent Program reviews that ODFW has provided comment on including the 2020 Annual Review which stated that the OWRD "does not believe that modifying the allocation cap is necessary at this time" and the Draft 5 year review which stated that "OWRD does not anticipate an immediate need to change the 200 cfs allocation cap; however, OWRD would like to explore the issue to of modification of the allocation cap in the next few years."

Please see our previous comments on the allocation cap and suggestions for tangible and measurable improvements to the Program that need to be addressed before modifying the allocation cap can be considered.

Sincerely,

Gerald J George

Gerald George, Deschutes District Fish Biologist