



PUBLIC NOTICE

Oregon Department of State Lands

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Comment Opportunity: Proposed Updates to the Essential Salmonid Habitat Map

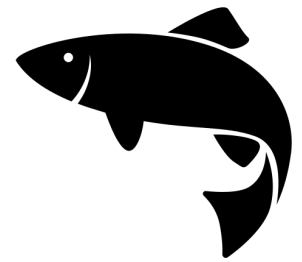
The map identifies streams where removing or adding materials likely requires a state permit

The Department of State Lands (DSL) is seeking comments on proposed updates to Oregon's map of essential habitat for salmonid fish species. **The comment period is open until Tuesday, March 3, 2026.**

Why is the habitat map important?

Created with scientific data from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), the "essential salmonid habitat" map identifies streams where fish like Chinook salmon and steelhead trout lay eggs and where young fish grow. To help protect this habitat, a removal-fill permit is usually required to remove or add any materials in these waters when placing riprap, installing culverts, building a dock, and other activities.

By checking the map and applying for a removal-fill permit if required, property owners help avoid or minimize impacts to essential habitat.



Proposed Updates to the 2026 Map

[View the proposed 2026 map here](#) and see more information on [DSL's essential salmonid habitat web page](#).

Changes to streams designated as essential habitat. We are updating the map to reflect current ODFW habitat data. Statewide, about 42 additional stream miles will now be designated as essential habitat. Approximately 1.7 stream miles are no longer essential habitat. This change from 2025 to 2026 represents less than a 1% change to the overall 22,000+ stream miles of essential habitat. GIS data steadily becomes more accurate as ODFW continues to improve their field mapping and verification process. Overall mileage on the same segment of stream may be impacted year-to-year by this higher level of detail and accuracy.

Updates to fish data. Data about which fish species inhabit streams has been updated.

How to Comment

Comments may be emailed to DSL.Comments@dsl.oregon.gov or mailed to DSL (Attn: ESH Map) at 775 Summer Street NE, Suite 100, Salem, OR 97301. The comment deadline is Tuesday, March 3, 2026.

Does your comment include a proposed edit to the map?

Edits may be proposed any time of the year using the [ESH Review Request Form](#). Proposed edits should correct map inaccuracies – for example, if the mapping does not reflect current on-the-ground conditions, or if there is a new barrier that prevents fish from reaching an area. Please complete this form if your comment includes an edit to the map.

Join the Essential Salmonid Habitat Map Mailing List

The email list is used to provide information about proposed map updates and other essential salmonid habitat information. [Join the email list](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

Are any activities exempt from needing a removal-fill permit?

Yes, exemptions include non-motorized activities involving less than one cubic yard, many fish passage and fish screening structures, some agricultural projects, and several others. [See the list of exempt activities in chapter three of the DSL guide to removal-fill permits.](#)

When will the next update happen?

Map updates occur as often as yearly and include a public review and comment period. [Subscribe to “essential salmonid habitat updates” to get on the email list.](#) Throughout the year, edits can be proposed at any time for consideration in future updates [using this form here.](#)

How will the removal of the Klamath River dams impact what is designated as essential habitat in the map?

This year’s update is unusual due to the historic removal of the four lower Klamath River dams in 2023-2024 and the rapid, ongoing changes to fish distribution that followed. This unprecedented action to reopen more than 400 miles of historic fish habitat and spawning grounds supports salmon and steelhead recovery, improves river health, and advances Tribal cultural and subsistence priorities.

Fish re-population is happening faster in some areas and slower in others.

Below Keno Dam, conditions allowed for earlier confirmation of observed anadromous fish use, supporting designation for some Klamath Basin areas in the proposed 2026 Essential Salmonid Habitat map.

Other observations occurred late in the 2025 field season or during periods when fish distribution was rapidly expanding and could not be included in the proposed 2026 map. These late-season observations occurred outside of the annual project timeline, after the point at which ODFW can reasonably collect, quality-check, verify, and supply data to DSL. Given both the timing and limited data on whether the observed habitat use reflects long-term, repeatable patterns, ODFW determined that these observations did not support designation as ESH for 2026 and that stronger data and adequate time for coordination are needed. Because ESH designation carries significant regulatory implications, DSL relies on ODFW’s reviewed and finalized data when proposing changes to the map.

ODFW monitoring will continue, and as fish habitat use becomes more consistent and data are finalized, DSL anticipates designating additional Klamath Basin stream miles in future updates. Any such updates would be brought forward with sufficient time to coordinate, consistent with the State of Oregon’s commitments under the Klamath Power and Facilities Agreement.

Why is the annual update delayed this year?

The ESH map is being released later than usual this year to accommodate increased interagency coordination on the late season observations in the Klamath Basin. Most years, updates to the ESH map are routine and reflect small, incremental changes to designated stream miles. Additional time was needed for interagency coordination before determining the appropriate next steps. The short delay does not change regulatory requirements or shorten the 30-day public comment period or the 60-day notice to Oregon’s federally recognized Tribes. DSL anticipates adopting an updated map in late March or early April 2026.

Questions about the map? Contact Wetland Ecology Specialist Daniel Evans at Daniel.Evans@dsl.oregon.gov