

Update to Board of County Commissioners

From: Public & Government Affairs

RE: Jonsson Center for Wildlife Conservation condor breeding facility

Date: 03-24-2022

<p>Summary</p>	<p>The Oregon Zoo operates a condor breeding facility at the Jonsson Center for Wildlife Conservation in Clackamas County, built in 2003. The Zoo’s condor breeding program represents one of the nation’s most successful endangered species reintroductions, helping to significantly increase the population of North America’s largest land bird through a partnership with the Yurok Tribe in northern California. This work entails releasing condors into Redwoods National Park as part of a broader effort to restore the bird to its historic range.</p> <p>In the last two years, the Jonsson Center has faced evacuations due to wildfires, experienced extended power outages due to ice and wind storms, and seen increased annual flooding. These occurrences have hampered management of the breeding site. As climate change progresses, the Zoo anticipates that these events will happen more frequently and with more severity.</p> <p>The Oregon Zoo is seeking FY23 federal funding (Congressionally Directed Spending) for the Condor Conservation Improvement Project, which would update and improve the Jonsson Center to better withstand weather-related disasters and ensure that breeding efforts can continue. Funding would support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fire suppression activities at the Center • development of an evacuation site to house birds during an emergency • improving infrastructure including increased generator capacity, enhanced internet access and water supply, and flood management <p>Metro has requested a letter from Clackamas County in support of the request.</p>
<p>Department Support</p>	<p>PGA – Clackamas County’s federal legislative principles speak to supporting the conservation of the county’s natural resources and improving disaster preparedness. This funding also would be directly invested into a facility that is located in Clackamas County.</p> <p>PGA does not view this funding request as being in competition with Clackamas County’s FY23 federal funding requests, as the funds are being requested from different appropriations accounts.</p>
<p>Staff Recommendation</p>	<p>Support the Oregon Zoo’s federal funding request by providing a letter of support for the project.</p>
<p>Timeline</p>	<p>FY23 Congressionally Directed Spending requests must be submitted to Senate and House offices by Monday, April 1.</p>



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

PUBLIC SERVICES BUILDING

2051 KAEN ROAD | OREGON CITY, OR 97045

March XX, 2022

Lynn Peterson, President
Metro
600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232

Dear President Peterson:

We are writing in support of the Condor Conservation Improvement Project, the Oregon Zoo's appropriations request which will support one of the country's strongest endangered species success stories.

It's a little known secret that one of the country's most renowned condor breeding facilities is located right in Clackamas County. The Oregon Zoo condor breeding facility houses over thirty condors (more than 5% of the world's total condor population), and in the twenty years that it has been in Clackamas County has produced more than 150 eggs, two thirds of which have hatched. More than 30% of the condors that have been released back into the wild as part of the Endangered Species Act program have been raised in Clackamas County.

As you well know, Clackamas County has experienced multiple disasters over the past two years including wildfires, ice and wind storms, flooding, and heat domes. Because of our diverse geography, topography, and urban-rural landscape, we have suffered from more extreme weather-related impacts than other parts of the state. As climate change progresses, we are working diligently to prepare Clackamas County to withstand more frequent and severe future events.

In order to ensure that the condor breeding operations continue in Clackamas County, we support the Oregon Zoo's request for federal funding to help the facility weather the next set of weather events. These investments will support Clackamas County's disaster preparedness efforts and help ensure that these magnificent birds can once again soar above their historic habitat.

Sincerely,

Tootie Smith, Chair
On behalf of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners