

RESOLUTION NO. 15-13

A RESOLUTION IN THE MATTER OF THE SEA LIONS AT WILLAMETTE FALLS

WHEREAS, the Willamette River at Oregon City is one of the most vibrant salmon fisheries in Oregon, which has a substantial economic impact to the local community; and

WHEREAS, California and Steller sea lion populations have increased significantly at the natural bottleneck that is Willamette Falls; and

WHEREAS, California sea lions now number beyond their biologically sustainable level and Steller sea lions were removed from the Endangered Species Act in 2013; and

WHEREAS, sea lions remain protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, preventing local public safety officers and wildlife managers from providing sound wildlife management in the urban setting; and

WHEREAS, sea lion predation on Upper Willamette Chinook salmon, steelhead, sturgeon, and lamprey at Willamette Falls is significant; and

WHEREAS, native runs of Upper Willamette Spring Chinook and Upper Willamette Winter Steelhead are listed as threatened on the Endangered Species List; and

WHEREAS, sea lions near Willamette Falls are negatively impacting the local economy, tourism, recreation, and public safety as they become more aggressive and conflict more regularly with sport fishers and other river users; and

WHEREAS, non-lethal hazing methods have been shown to be unsuccessful at reducing the numbers of sea lions or the amount of their predation; and

WHEREAS, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in 2013 that eliminating a certain number of problem sea lions at Bonneville Dam is justified to conserve imperiled Pacific salmon species.

NOW, THEREFORE, OREGON CITY RESOLVES THE FOLLOWING:

1. Oregon City urges its federal delegation to support efforts to authorize the State of Oregon, in conjunction with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), to actively manage problem sea lions near Willamette Falls.
2. Oregon City urges its federal delegation to direct NOAA, in conjunction with state, local and tribal officials, to develop a long-term strategy to reduce sea lion predation on adult salmon, steelhead, sturgeon, and lamprey in the Willamette River and especially near Willamette Falls.

Approved and adopted at a regular meeting of the City Commission held on the 15th day of April 2015.

DAN HOLLADAY, Mayor

Attested to this 15th day of April 2015:

Approved as to legal sufficiency:

Kattie Riggs, City Recorder

City Attorney