

Applying for Scientific Take Permits in the Willamette basin

Any research in the Willamette basin that involves handling of any fish or wildlife species requires a Scientific Taking permit from ODFW. If sampling could catch wildlife species (non-fish or -shellfish, e.g. amphibians) then you will need a separate ODFW Wildlife permit, which is a separate process than that listed here. Handling of **any** fish species requires an ODFW permit. Handling or harassment of any ESA-listed species under NMFS' jurisdiction additionally requires a Take Authorization letter from NMFS. The ODFW and NMFS fish take permits can be applied for simultaneously through an online system NMFS operates. This system allows you to apply for your permit and complete your report with one application. Thus one application will be sent to both entities and each agency will then separately issue their permit.

Bull trout studies will require a recovery "10(a)(1)(A)" permit application to the USFWS, which is a separate process. Permit applications can be found online at https://www.fws.gov/endangered/permits/recovery_permits.html and the Pacific Regional office should be contacted for further information. A contact information link is available at https://www.fws.gov/endangered/permits/recovery_permits-contacts.html.

HOW to apply:

To apply for your ODFW and NMFS scientific take permits, go to the Authorizations and Permits for Protected Species (APPS) site at <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov/>. The site will walk you through a number of questions in order to determine the permits you must apply for. If a new user, you will have to set up a new user account.

Your application will remain a draft until you click the SUBMIT button. While in the draft stage, you can make changes to your application without any impacts. The application does not get sent to ODFW or NMFS for review until the application is submitted. Thus, you can start your draft at any time. Once submitted, it is common for the agencies to have questions and request clarifications regarding your application; make sure to include a **contact email**.

Whenever work is occurring over the duration of your study, one of the listed co-investigators must be present at the study site with a copy of the permits on them. Make sure any researcher working independently is listed as a co-investigator. Once the permits are issued, make sure each co-investigator has copies of the permits and carries them while working in the field.

On your application, include that your study was approved by the Willamette Action Team for Ecological Restoration (WATER) and note the BiOp RPAs your research is supporting. NOTE: First check with your Corps POC to verify your study was approved by WATER.

Be clear about the year for which you are requesting take, and only submit ONE application for your study. Make sure your study will be funded prior to submitting the application.

WHEN to submit:

Verify your study have been reviewed and approved by WATER. Funding should be assured or, preferably, in place. Please make sure you hit the SUBMIT button on your application when you are ready to submit it. Otherwise, your application will remain in draft stage and NMFS and ODFW will not be notified it is ready for review. **Submit applications at least 6 weeks prior to the start of your study.** This allows time for ODFW and NMFS to review the application, process payment, coordinate with local ODFW District Biologists for comments on the permit, and contact you with questions. If aspects of your study change before the permit is issued, you can contact ODFW and NMFS to make changes or they can set your permit back to draft form for you to edit. Your Corps POC is also able to contact the agencies regarding your changes. **Your permits are not final until they are issued.**

Permits expire no later than the end of the calendar year on 12/31 of each year, for NMFS it may be earlier. Make sure to consider the timeframe of your research when planning your application and subsequent renewals.

HOW to pay:

NMFS will not charge any fees for permit applications, however, ODFW charges a processing fee. Your permit will not be issued until payment is received. Once your application is submitted, ODFW will send you an email with payment instructions, questions or comments about the project or application that will need to be addressed, and any further information from you that will be needed to process the application. A check can be mailed or faxed at that time, or you can fax a credit card number following the instructions on the form. Do not attempt to pay for the permit before you submit your application.

Mid-season changes – MODIFYING your permit:

What you do in the field must match what you were approved for in your permit- so if anything changes during the field work (scope, sampling timing or effort, species encountered, number of fish handled, gear, locations, etc.), you will need to request a permit modification.

If during your study you encounter and handle more fish than you originally anticipated, it is important that you modify your permit to remain in compliance. If you anticipate exceeding the limits of your permit prior to starting or during your study please contact ODFW and NMFS as soon as possible to modify the permit. If your take is much higher than anticipated at the end of your study, this also will require a modification. Do not wait until the study is complete to update your take numbers or at the end of the year when closing out the permit. If other major components of your study design change (including sampling location, timing, level of effort), this also requires a modification of your permit to remain in compliance. Again, this simply requires coordination with ODFW and NMFS to update your permit.

Do note that if your study ends up unintentionally killing large numbers of fish, if you violate the terms and conditions, fail to submit an annual report (that we approve), or are clearly negligent in the implementation of your project, your permit is unlikely to be renewed in the future.

MULTI-YEAR or MULTI-SEASON studies:

If your study is recurring, either seasonally or annually, you do not need to recreate a brand new application every year or season. Instead you can renew your original application. If your study has a spring and fall component, you can apply for the spring component and later submit a modification request to add the fall component. This will be faster than submitting a new, separate application for the fall portion of the study.

For multi-year studies, you can go back into the previous year's application and request a renewal each year. This will speed up your application since by clicking renew it is copying your old permit and will let you edit to make updates for the upcoming research. Additionally, this can be done if the same study will be conducted at a new location. You will need to specify any changes from the original application and the ODFW and NMFS reviewers will target their review on these changes. You can submit your renewal request at any time, but the permit will not be renewed until the reporting requirements for the original permit are completed.

CLOSING OUT your permit:

Your permit document will specify when after-season reporting must be completed (usually 12/31 or 1/31 each year). If you are done with work before the end of the year, you can submit the report early. Reporting is completed by using the APPS website. Under your permit number and information, you will need to fill in the actual take and handling numbers next to the columns listing what you initially expected. You can also attach files and preliminary reports to the permit report, such as a PowerPoint of a Willamette Science Review presentation or a draft report. Generally, this reporting needs to be completed before the end of the calendar year. Permit renewals will not be issued until this requirement is completed.