

ODFW breaks ground for new youth fishing pond

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife broke ground for a new youth fishing pond last Monday, on the former Spring Creek hatchery site near Camp Sherman.

According to Jen Luke, ODFW fish biologist in Bend, the half-acre pond, once completed, will be stocked with rainbow trout and open only to anglers 17 years old and younger.

“We are very excited to begin work on the pond,” said Luke. “Having a destination to serve kids and their families fits perfectly into our plans to connect with communities.”

In addition to the fishing opportunities, the pond will be used as an outdoor classroom for Salmon Trout Enhancement Program (STEP) volunteers to teach youth about the lifecycles of salmon and trout. The pond could also be used for smolt acclimation and egg hatch-boxes as part of the effort

to re-introduce chinook salmon to the Metolius, upper Deschutes and Crooked River basins.

Equipment — two excavators and two dump trucks — will be operating during the week from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The initial work involves excavating, moving fill, and setting up fencing. According to Luke, based on the weather, work will likely continue through November.

Funding the project was done primarily through grants from the Restoration and Enhancement Program (R and E). The R and E grant program provides about \$3,000,000 per year to fishery projects throughout Oregon. The grant program was established June 29, 1989, when the Oregon Fisheries Restoration and Enhancement Act was signed into law.

“This is the ideal project to be supported by R and E grant monies because it creates opportunity where

opportunity is needed,” said Bruce McIntosh, ODFW inland fisheries administrator. “I appreciate the support we’ve received for this project from the R and E Board, our partners in the community and the Fish and Wildlife Commission.”

The pond is currently referred to as the Spring Creek Pond. However, renaming the pond may be under consideration by ODFW.

“There are several individuals who have been instrumental in supporting this

project and who have also been long-time volunteers and supporters of youth outdoor activities,” said Luke.

According to Luke, before any renaming actions are taken, there will be opportunity for input from the public.



PHOTO PROVIDED

This area will soon be stocked with rainbow trout for youth fishing.

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