



# TU Celebrates 50 Years of Protecting Cold, Clean, Fishable Water.

## Oregon Council Trout Unlimited

June 6, 2011

Co-chairs Barnhart and Berger, committee members-

I am Tom Wolf, chair of the Oregon Council Trout Unlimited, a cold water conservation group with representation in most states across the country. Trout Unlimited supports HB 3374 because it is a bill that will help fund part of ODFW's mandate for conservation.

In 2009, Dean Runyan Associates completed an economic report for ODFW looking, in great detail, at money spent in our state on fishing, hunting, shellfishing and wildlife viewing. \$2.5 billion is spent on these activities every year, with over half spent on wildlife viewing. There is in the ODFW budget lots of money available for fishing and hunting-license fees, federal money from taxes on hunting/fishing gear and other federal money from sources such as Mitchell Act money. So there is money available for hatcheries, habitat, etc for provide for game wildlife and fish. But for non-game fish and wildlife such as songbirds, the target for many wildlife viewers, there is not such a wide source of funding available. And with less General fund and lottery money for the 2011-2013 ODFW budget, finding extra money to protect songbirds and other non-game fish/wildlife has become more problematic.

I have served on the ODFW External Budget Advisory Committee for several years, and along with the others who are on this committee, we have debated for many years how we are going to fund the work of protecting Oregon's non-game fish and wildlife. And in particular, provide funding for the parts of the ODFW Conservation Strategy which deals with wildlife such as songbirds. The best idea which has emerged from that discussion is the wild birdseed tax, HB 3374. It is very small fee which will provide a couple million dollars for ODFW budget to use for non-game wildlife. It is the kind of fee that makes sense and will be supported by the public.

As less and less money goes to ODFW from General Fund and lottery monies, we need to look at creative ideas for providing money for the work ODFW does. And HB 3374 is that kind of creative and necessary idea. I ask your committee to vote this bill out of committee with a "do pass" recommendation. It will help ODFW carry out it's responsibility to protect our native fish/wildlife and continue to provide viewing opportunities for many Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Tom Wolf, Chair  
Oregon Council Trout Unlimited

MEASURE: HB 3374  
EXHIBIT: 7  
HOUSE REVENUE COMMITTEE  
DATE: 6/8/2011 PAGES: 1  
SUBMITTED BY: TOM WOLF