

Hampton Susan

Subject: FW: NO on SB1582

From: Garrett Phillips [mailto:garrett.b.phillips@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2012 10:21 AM
To: Sen Dingfelder; Sen Olsen; Sen Hass; Sen Prozanski; Sen Thomsen
Cc: Sen Shields; Rep Kotek
Subject: NO on SB1582

Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

SB 1582 would undermine Department of State Land's ability to protect wetlands and waters of the state. It sets up an arbitration process when permits are denied and when there is a disagreement on a wetland delineation. This extended process does not ensure that qualify wetland scientists would review decisions and arbitrators which would partially be appointed by the applicant and would have the power to overturn DSL final order.

Wetlands provide some of our most valuable bird habitats in the Oregon, especially in cities where native birds make up about 2/3rds of native vertebrate species. Wetlands also play an essential role in maintaining clean cool water in Oregon's rivers during our hot summers. Hence, they support a wide diversity of aquatic life as well as water-based recreation from swimming to sport fishing. The absorptive capacity of wetlands also helps reduce the losses of life and property by helping contain raging winter flood waters, like those that struck the Willamette Valley this past January. When these functions provided by wetlands are lost, they are very difficult and expensive to replace. One study valued wetlands in a local watershed in Washington State at \$36,000-\$51,000 per acre just for flood control.

In the Willamette Valley, approximately 57% of wetlands have been lost to land development. While state and local wetland protections adopted over the last 30 years have slowed the pace of wetland loss, one study found that the Willamette Valley continues to lose more than 500 acres per year. Rate of loss may be even higher in and around cities, since urban or exurban development is the leading cause of wetlands loss.

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