

HB 2516 is in conflict with what Oregonians overwhelmingly passed in 2010 through Measure 76. Measure 76 states in Section 4, Subsection 2:

“...these moneys shall be used to:

- a) Acquire from willing owners interests in land or water that will protect or restore native fish or wildlife habitats, which interests may include but are not limited to fee interests, conservation easements, or leases;
- b) Carry out projects to protect or restore native fish or wildlife habitats;
- c) Carry out projects to protect or restore natural watershed functions to improve water quality or stream flows; and
- d) Carry out resource assessment, planning, design and engineering, technical assistance, monitoring and outreach activities necessary for projects funded under paragraphs (a) through (c) of this subsection.

Providing outdoor learning experiences for the youth of Oregon is very important in connecting children with their environment and building an awareness for professions and care of the natural environment. There are several existing educational programs that provide this important service to our youth statewide and we encourage you to support existing programs to build upon and leverage what has been established to date. Our organization has established a natural resources curriculum tied to state standards and tailored to elementary school students in underserved communities. The program reaches 600 students a year and provides in classroom instruction complemented by outdoor field experiences to all classes 3-6 in the communities of Oakridge, Westfir, Dexter, Lowell, Pleasant Hill and Springfield. We propose supporting existing successful educational programs over reinventing the wheel for a statewide Outdoor School.

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