

Senate Bill 846
Testimony of Michael Garrity, American Rivers
Before the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee
April 16, 2013

American Rivers' appreciates this opportunity to share our strong concerns with, and opposition to, SB 846. As members of the Columbia River-Umatilla Solutions Taskforce (CRUST) as well as the Office of Columbia River Policy Advisory Group in the State of Washington, American Rivers has worked hard to find collaborative solutions to problems facing the Northwest's farms and fish when it comes to water supplies both in- and out-of-stream. Unfortunately, SB 846 fails to meet the balance established by the CRUST agreement. We agree with the criticisms of the bill raised by our colleagues and partners at WaterWatch of Oregon. Some of the bill's principal defects include:

- Requiring only "consideration" of the effects of water development projects on native fish; CRUST calls for avoiding negative impacts to instream flows and does not waive the need to adhere to all federal and state laws protecting native fish – neither should state legislation;
- SB 846 appears to read the CRUST agreement as endorsing the development of a "Storage Project." This is not the case. The CRUST agreed only to the development of a statewide program that considers new water storage and works toward water conservation and instream flow protections. No new legislation is needed to meet these goals.
- SB 846 would undermine a stakeholder agreement on governance of the CRUST moving forward, failing to adequately respect the delicate balance achieved by stakeholders looking to find consensus, win-win solutions to Oregon's water needs.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

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