



TUALATIN RIVERKEEPERS®

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February 20, 2013

To: Chair Witt and Members of the Committee
House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

From: Tualatin Riverkeepers

Re: Support of HB 2032 regarding payment for compensatory mitigation

Tualatin Riverkeepers support HB 2032 and believe the proposed changes in calculating payment for offsite compensatory mitigation will better address actual costs to cover expenses that the state is reasonably expected to incur. Tualatin Riverkeepers has ongoing concern about the adequacy of wetland resource protection because it rests on the success of mitigation to compensate for resource losses. We believe mitigation efforts have improved over the years but the state still struggles to achieve their overarching goal of not net loss of the state's wetlands.

Benefits of wetland resources are many – flood control, fish and wildlife habitat, protection of water quality and hydrologic function are all important ecological benefits. We believe mitigation should ideally occur within the sub-basin where the development impacts occur. This is especially important in urban areas where cumulative development impacts can seriously undermine flood storage, exacerbate flooding in other areas and potentially degrade water quality.

We believe that HB 2032 improves payments calculated for compulsory off site mitigation requirements of removal fill projects to account for actual expenses and regional differences. The bill recognizes that with the current statewide averaging formula – some may be paying too much and some too little.

HB 2032 is a step in the right direction and we encourage your support of the bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian Wegener". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Wegener".

Brian Wegener, Riverkeeper
Advocacy & Communications Manager
Tualatin Riverkeepers