

Western Fishing Adventures LTD
19363 Willamette Dr. # 302
West Linn, OR 97068
(503) 250-0558
BSWFA@aol.com
Fax. (503) 655-0894
Brad Staples

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Chair Witt and members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

Regarding: My support of HB 2697

Having been a fishing guide in Oregon (30 years) and Alaska (7 years) I believe that we need to help restore our native anadromous fish runs. One of the contributing factors of the decline of our Salmon and Steelhead fisheries is that there are not enough nutrients being left in the streams after the limited amount of fish that are returning from the ocean spawn in their streams of birth. The Salmon & Steelhead that do make it back to the spawning beds is less than what is required for a sustainable fishery.

These returns are being supplemented with hatchery fish. The fish that are caught by anglers and cleaned and gutted should be able to be placed in the streams where they were caught. The remains of the fish that are not retained for human consumption benefit the other fish, crayfish, birds and invertebrates species that live in the streams and creeks. This fact has been proven in many studies.

Carcass planting or placement in certain freshwater environments is very beneficial to the recovery of our Salmon, Steelhead, Lamprey and resident fish. If done with in-basin excess hatchery Salmon, and placed where the young fish can use the nutrients, this is very beneficial to help get the out-migrating smolts to be larger and stronger for their transition to the salt water environment that they encounter as their life cycle changes.

As a fishing guide on the Lower Deschutes River, we are required that wild Steelhead are to be released after landing. The hatchery fish that are retained are to be brought out intact to the boat ramp to prove to the agencies (if there is a person checking) that they are a fin clipped hatchery fish.

Thanks you for taking my opinion into consideration. I urge you to pass HB 2697 out of committee.

Sincerely,

Brad Staples