



Oregon Council Trout Unlimited

Feb. 27, 2013

Testimony before House Land Use Committee on HB 2173

Chair Clem and Committee members-

For the record, my name is Tom Wolf, chair of the Oregon Council Trout Unlimited, with 3000 members in Oregon and 150,000 across the nation. As the largest non-profit coldwater restoration group, Trout Unlimited opposes HB 2173.

Trout Unlimited takes a very deliberate and careful route when it comes to doing restoration projects. We try to take a whole watershed view, get good scientific feedback and develop a strategy that works with all stakeholders in the basin, including private landowners. Working on wetlands, restoring them when possible are keep elements that help in restoring watersheds. For example we are working with several private landowners on the Necanicum River, with their permission, to restore wetlands and create off channel areas for coho, chum, Chinook, cutthroat and steelhead. Having been to several of those projects over the years, it is very encouraging to see the willingness of these landowners as we work together to bring back wild salmon on this wonderful coastal river. These kind of projects is something TU using our vast numbers of volunteers, across Oregon and the nation. It is a vital part of our mission, working with willing landowners to restore rivers and their ecosystems.

That is why, even though TU is moved by the testimony of the various landowners, we cannot support HB 2173. It would make doing restoration tougher and make it longer to get permits to work with willing land owners on crucial projects. Rather than passing a bill to deal with isolated incidences, let's put together a work group, with stakeholders involved included to look, at solutions. It seems to me that instead of slowing the work of various groups like TU and impeding landowners who are interested in having their land acquired outright or as easements, let's work together on a solution that doesn't punish everyone but rather works at common sense solutions. This common sense way of reaching solutions is part of Oregon's heritage, and as a 6th generation Oregonian I have seen this common sense approach work many times.

So please stop HB 2173 and let's look for a solution which all parties can live with. It is the Oregon way and should be the solution we seek to a complex issue.

