



Oregon Council Trout Unlimited

April 5, 2015

Trout Unlimited Comments SB 125

Chair Edwards and Committee members-

I am here today, as the representative of Trout Unlimited, the nation's largest cold water conservation group, to offer our comments SB 125.

There certainly needs to be improvement in the public process for adopting programs of fish and wildlife policy for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Trout Unlimited understands the concerns expressed by the sponsor of this bill, Senator Hansell, and appreciates his efforts in bring forth this bill. In particular, Trout Unlimited likes some of the concepts that are expressed in Section 2 and think that they would greatly aid in the public process conducted by ODFW on their various programs.

Trout Unlimited also supports the amendments being proposed by Native Fish Society and believe that they will further improve this bill. As an organization who works with many state and federal agencies across our nation, Trout Unlimited believes any legitimate and productive suggestion to improve public process for an agency should be implemented. SB 125 and the proposed amendments certainly offer some concepts and language which do that.

Trout Unlimited's concerns about this bill are that it creates a separate process outside the current ODFW process, which would cost extra money and take extra time. Rather than create a new process, wouldn't it be better for the proponents of this bill to work with ODFW to address their concerns? It is important that the science of ODFW be implemented in plans they develop. To create separate science bodies or research bodies and an extra process is both unnecessary and expensive, at a time when money for natural resources work in our state is very limited.

So Trout Unlimited cannot support SB 125 in its present form but with some amendments-the ones suggested by the Native Fish Society- we possibly could support it. But we believe the most economic and best solution is that the people concerned about the ODFW process is to work with them to fix the process. We charge the natural resource agencies and their boards/commissions to be the lead on various issues and create programs to deal with those issues. It is only fair that we allow ODFW to continue to be the lead on this. If there is a probably with the current ODFW process, let's work

together to fix and improve that problem. Maybe some of the concepts expressed in SB 125 can be incorporated into the current ODFW process.

In closing, SB 125 is a very sincere proposal but in its present form it will be both redundant and costly- we cannot support in its present form. Trout Unlimited asks that either it be amended to address our concerns, or better yet, the concerned individuals and ODFW work together to make the current process better.

Sincerely,

Tom Wolf,

Executive Director

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