



CCA

**COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION
OREGON**

Testimony to the Senate Rules Committee
Salem, OR

5-19-2015

Senator Rosenbaum and members of the Senate Rules Committee, my name is Bruce Polley and I am an unpaid volunteer with the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) Oregon and I reside in Sherwood, Oregon.

I am before you today to testify on behalf of the thousands of CCA members that you have been hearing from about the appointment of Bruce Buckmaster to the ODFW Commission.

As you have been hearing, sport fishers and fish advocates were shocked and dismayed at Governor Brown's unexpected announcement of appointing Bruce Buckmaster to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Commission seat for District 1.

The ODFW Commission is tasked with directing ODFW and their policies, and their implementation and modifications to those policies. In short, the Commission directs ODFW.

Regardless of media reports and messages of support for Mr. Buckmaster, he is simply the main political operative, spokesperson, and past registered lobbyist for the Columbia River Gillnet Industry. And industry that pays so little into the ODFW budget, that their contributions arguably don't cover the management costs of their own fisheries.

In addition to the concern of having a lobbyist on any state board that manages that industry, Mr. Buckmaster has worked to inflict retribution on the sport fishers in Oregon.

Mr. Buckmaster and his industry suggested and lobbied for the "Youngs Bay Closed Area" banning sport fishers from a popular area in the Columbia River. An action that ODFW staff has testified has little to no effect on the Young's Bay Terminal fishery. And proposed that all sport fishing be moved above the Megler Bridge in Astoria. Which would basically kill the largest sport fishery on the Columbia River.

Buckmaster also proposed setting up a gillnetting terminal area near Portland in the Willamette River.

I would like to read for you a couple of quotes that Mr. Buckmaster made during the ODFW Commission meeting on June 6th, 2013. These are from the adopted minutes of that meeting.

"Buckmaster said he testified against SB 830...he morally cannot defend SB 830 as it stands"

In regards to the fiscal impact statement on the reforms.

"Buckmaster said he did not struggle with it; he was vehemently opposed to it"

Now let's compare that to the form letter than our members have been getting back from Governor Brown's office.

The primary concern of some appears to be that Mr. Buckmaster's appointment signals a change in policy regarding the lower Columbia gillnet program. Mr. Buckmaster has assured Governor Brown that he will play a constructive role in the implementation of SB 830 (2013) and in other issues that come before the commission.

Something just doesn't square up in those quotes and statements.

Sport fishers that fish in the entire Columbia Basin are now being charged an additional fee to support the new Columbia River Reforms. Generating about \$2.5 million dollars, or 5 times the entire contribution of the Columbia River Gillnet Industry to the ODFW Budget per biennium.

ODFW is an agency in a financial crisis. And sport fishers are the largest stakeholder of ODFW. ODFW is asking for large fee increases to try and balance their books. And they are coming to their largest stakeholder asking for the largest share of these increases.

This appointment is harmful to ODFW, and an insult to their largest stakeholder, sport fishers.

Please do not pass this appointment out of this committee.

Thank you for considering our request.

Best Regards,

Bruce Polley
CCA-OR