



Oregon Council Trout Unlimited

February 2, 2016

Trout Unlimited supports SB 1574

Chair Edwards and Committee members-

I am Tom Wolf, Executive Director of the Oregon Council trout, which is part of the largest coldwater conservation group whose members are dedicated to the restoration of wild salmonids and their watershed habitat.

In groups like Trout Unlimited, in all the work we do, the “elephant” in the room is always climate change and the impact that will have on cold water watersheds. Trout Unlimited has a document called “Healing Trouble Waters” which has within in our restoration motto “Protect, Reconnect, Restore, Sustain” . This drives our TU conservation goals which is to make watersheds healthy enough that salmon and trout can survive in a future of higher temperatures and the risks that brings.

Other fishery organizations also see climate change as the biggest factor facing the future of fish. The American Fishery Society, an organization of professional fishery experts, recently had their 2016 Annual meeting in Portland. At the meeting, 4000 professional gathered for seminars and meetings on fishery issues. The prevailing topic of concern to those fishery professional is the concern for a warming planet and the impact this will have on fish and their habitat. We are seeing alarming examples of how this will affect the future of fisheries both ecologically, economically and recreationally.

And economically, climate change could have a huge impact on the fishing industry in Oregon. The commercial and recreational fishing communities bring into Oregon’s economy almost \$ 2 billion annual. And most of this is in rural communities, where this brings need money into cash strapped towns. Species like salmon, sturgeon, steelhead, trout and crab need cold water and with the impact from a warming climate, these species could disappear from Oregon waters, bringing economic depression into the fishing community and rural areas dependent on this money.

So for a variety of reasons, Trout Unlimited feels it is important to do something about the vast amount of carbon being polluted into our environment, which the scientific community has shown is the major cause of our current climate change crisis. I will not go into the fine points of the Bill-I will leave that to others. I just want to state that Trout Unlimited vigorously supports SB 1574 and urges this committee to pass it. If we want to stop this severe ecological crisis, the biggest facing us, steps such as outlined in SB 1574 must be passed and the steps outlined in the bill followed.

And I will close with the old cliché-but very true here- it is the right thing to do.

Tom Wolf,
Executive Director
Oregon Council Trout Unlimited