



Oregon Council Trout Unlimited

Feb. 3, 2016

Trout Unlimited urges "Yes" on SB 1529

Chair Fagan and Committee members-

My name is Tom Wolf and I am here as the Executive Director of the Oregon Council Trout Unlimited, representing the nation's largest cold water conservation group. Our 3200 members in Oregon and 160,000 nationwide work hard as volunteers to protect and restore habitat for cold water fish, in particular salmon and trout.

In our recent 80-page report "State of the Trout", Instream flow to provide sufficient amounts of water for streams is one of the key issues impacting the 28 species/subspecies of trout in the United States, with 8 of those existing in Oregon. Obviously community and city use of water has an impact on the amount of water available for apple flow in streams. Without adequate amounts of water, fish face the problems of high temperature mortality, less oxygen and lack of available water for protection from predators. In the recent drought conditions, we have faced in this state, watering lawns during these drought conditions would have a large negative impacts to water supplies.

SB 1529 would give homeowners in homeowner's associations the ability to opt out to water their lawns or gardens during drought conditions-a provision expected in some homeowner association contracts. Trout Unlimited feels that watering one's lawn is a much less important use of water than for drinking, manufacturing, cooking, fish and wildlife needs, farming, etc. Conscientious home owners deserve the ability to obey their moral compass and opt out of watering, during severe low water conditions, if they chose to. It should be a freedom of choice issue. HB 4090 doesn't force people to stop watering their lawn-it just gives them the ability to do so if they choose to during drought conditions.

So Trout Unlimited urges that the committee members vote yes on SB 1529 and move it forward. As we face the long term possibility of continued drought, this bill will help.

Tom Wolf,

Executive Director

Oregon Council Trout Unlimited