



Representative Ken Helm, Chair  
House Committee on Energy and Environment

Re: HB 2485

Chair Helm, Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Association of Soil and water Conservation Districts (OACD) is a private organization representing, supporting, and strengthening Oregon Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs). SWCDs provide technical and financial assistance to private landowners to implement voluntary conservation, enhancements, and maintenance of Oregon's natural resources. It is in this capacity Grant SWCD is proposed a pilot project in the John Day River Basin for the benefit of fish, wildlife, and their habitat.

OACD fully supports HB 2485 as well as any proposed amendments.

House Bill 2485 and any proposed amendments will as a pilot project provide:

- Landowners the ability to implement conservation measures voluntarily
- The ability to refit diversion structures to be environmentally friendly as well as more efficient and effective to a landowner's operation
- Maintenance of measurement and flow devices as required in current statute
- Maintenance and perhaps enhancement of needed information for landowner and agencies
- Maintenance of the landowner's water right and the acreage to be irrigated
- Enhanced flexibility in irrigation management after the diversion
- Will not cost the state any fees except as already allowed by statute
- A sufficient amount of time for landowners to assess their operations as to the feasibility of changing the point of diversion as well as time to assess the impact of the point of diversion has environmentally as well as economically
- Encouragement to other landowners in other areas to seek innovative ideas and methods to address their conservation needs at the local level

Oregon has always sought to maintain its natural resources and rural and agriculturally based economies through the use of local innovation and expertise enhanced through thoughtful and thoroughly discussed ideas with state agencies. This idea and proposal is indicative of local landowners, local SWCDs state and federal agencies can accomplish when given opportunity. The approval of HB 2485 will continue that tradition.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 2485.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jerry Nicolescu".

Jerry Nicolescu  
Executive Director

Oregon Association of Conservation Districts