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3.15.17

To: House Committee on Energy and Environment

Re: HB 2496 Appropriates General Funds for Sediment Study

This bill raises important policy questions:

- Should the state allocate general fund dollars directly to privately owned businesses?
- What is the priority of this project relative to other habitat projects in the lower Rogue River?
- Wouldn't the local watershed council or the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board be a more appropriate funding source for this project?
- Where does this project fit within the available general fund revenues that the legislature has to allocate this session?

A more appropriate use of limited general fund dollars may be to spend them on critically important state obligations, including the funding of important state natural resource agency programs.

A particular case in point is the toxics monitoring program at the Department of Environmental Quality. That program has historically been underfunded and could benefit from the infusion of another half million dollars of general funds.