



March 13,2017

Trout Unlimited testimony in opposition to HB 2496

Chair Helm and Committee members-

My name is Tom Wolf, here representing Trout Unlimited, the nation's largest coldwater conservation group. Our mission is to protect and restore native wild coldwater species and their habitat. I am here today to oppose HB 2496.

HB 2496 is an unnecessary and wasteful bill which asks for \$ 452,390 from state general funds to do a sediment study of lower Rogue River by the private firm River Docs, LLC. TU fails to understand why the state should be giving almost half a million dollars to a private company to do a study that is 1. In preview of natural resources agencies to do 2. Uncertain as to how necessary to do it and 3. If there is necessity for it, should be funded by private foundation or local funds-not state general funds.

Right now, as many of you are aware, Oregon state Natural Resources agencies, as well as other state agencies, have been asked to prepare lists of 15% cuts from their agency budgets. This is due to state budget deficits. So, as we cut the ability of state Natural Resource agencies to accomplish their mission, HB 2496 asks us to give close to \$500,000 to Rivers Doc, LLC, in order to do a sediment study-with no plan or reason for the study.

If one goggles the name River Doc, LLC, all I have been able to find is a list of officers (3) with no description of history of what this group has done or does now. So, this just adds to the reasons why we shouldn't give a large sum of state general fund to a group with a vague existence. This is fiscally irresponsible in a time when the state needs to be very careful of protecting and accounting for our general fund money.

And if a fellow non-profit group put in a request for general fund money for sediment study, I would oppose this bill still. General fund money is not here to be used for purposes of bills such as HB 2496. There exists foundation money or local money that can be used to fund studies such as this. This bill, HB 2496, is unneeded and would divert money needed for state agencies. Please do not pass HB 2496.

