



March 29, 2017

Joint Ways & Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 5010; Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Budget

Dear Chairs Frederick and Witt, members of the committee,

The Oregon Cattlemen's Association ("OCA") is the voice of the cattle industry in Oregon. We represent over 2,000 ranchers in Oregon and aim to help grow Oregon's beef industry and promote environmentally and socially sound economic practices in producing beef products sold worldwide. Oregon has over 13,000 cattle producers, using 57% of state agricultural lands and comprising 14% of Oregon's total agricultural sector.

We work closely with the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW) on a variety of issues. Livestock producers are uniquely dependent on the effectiveness and efficiency of ODFW as our producers provide land, feed and water for Oregon's diverse wildlife population. Our cooperation, collaboration and commitment to conservation is often overlooked by the public, but the staff of ODFW is keenly aware of ranchers work on the ground. With this relationship in mind, we first recognize ODFW staff, its great work and our continued relationship. Secondly, we want to highlight several areas of interest and concern for our industry as examples of our work and collaboration and dependence on ODFW.

OCA is an industry leader in the continued dialogue over livestock-wolf conflict, wolf management and predator control. Russ Morgan and his team have done an excellent job in the past years' review of Oregon's Wolf Conservation and Management Plan and we look forward to our continued work together.

In another example of collaboration, OCA has been intimately involved in the comprehensive "all-lands, all-threats" plan to conserve sage grouse and promote rangeland health and economic development vital to the future of rural eastern Oregon economies. On that note, we request approval of management of state's sage grouse mitigation program and the agency's request for \$425,000.

We also highlight our role in sustaining Oregon's wildlife populations. Whether it is losing alfalfa to mule deer, hay to elk, or calves and sheep to wolf and cougars, livestock producers interact with wildlife and face challenges and losses every day throughout our state. As we requested to this committee in regards to the Oregon Department of Agriculture budget, we simply ask that Oregonians continue to support us when interaction with wildlife creates

challenges for our operations. Our coalition respectfully asks that the committee restore \$470,140 to WS predator control in the ODFW budget.

Finally, given the harsh weather this winter, ranchers have had particular challenges with mule deer and elk. As we have shared with this committee before, we are hearing stories of ranchers allowing starving deer and elk to feed on haystacks in pastures or access other food sources that, costing the producers with no ability to recoup that cost, simply out of their commitment to Oregon's wildlife. We urge the committee and the department to redirect staff, where necessary, to allow for management of elk and deer, particularly in Eastern Oregon. This will save ranchers from loss.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerome Rosa". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Jerome Rosa, Executive Director