



May 20, 2017

To: Joint Ways and Means Capital Construction Subcommittee  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301  
Re: Support for SB-5530

Dear Co-Chairs Girod and Holvey:

Trout Unlimited is a non-profit organization with 150,000 members nationally and 650 members in the Deschutes Chapter. Its mission is the restoration of cold water fisheries. Restoration of instream flows in the Upper Deschutes River is a current goal.

Currently the major work supporting this goal is the Upper Deschutes Basin Study. This work, supported by the Bureau of Reclamation and the Oregon Water Resources Department, is a collaborative effort supported by a large and diverse group of stakeholders including our chapter. Results from this work as well as prior studies suggest there is enough available water to meet most instream, agricultural and municipal supply demands. Conservation of agricultural water use through infrastructure modernization, management innovation and on farm efficiencies is the foundation of these solutions.

As basin stakeholders move from planning to implementation of solutions, financing the projects becomes an immediate and major challenge. To this end, Senator Merkley has recently presented an opportunity through PL-566 appropriations to secure \$25 million federal dollars in fiscal year 2017. This funding requires 1:1 matching funds. State support for these funds would represent a wise investment for the citizens of Oregon.

Oregon would realize a return on investment in several ways. These infrastructure projects will be an immediate economic stimulus for the region. But more importantly, these projects are the basis for stabilization of water supplies to the North Unit Irrigation District. NUID contributes \$260 million to the regional economy annually (Headwaters Economics, 2017). Compliance with requirements for the ESA listed Oregon Spotted Frog may jeopardize NUID's future unless conservation frees up water to move between districts and instream river flows. Investment in canal piping is the necessary first step.

The Deschutes Chapter of Trout Unlimited supports state financing of matching funds through SB-5530 for Deschutes Basin Board of Control work to achieve these goals.

Sincerely,

Michael Tripp  
Past President, Deschutes Redbands Chapter of Trout Unlimited



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