



June 29,2017

Trout Unlimited testimony in support of SB 1039

Before Ways and Means Natural Resources Committee

Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair Witt and committee members-

My name is Tom Wolf, here representing the over 3000 members of Trout Unlimited here in Oregon. Trout Unlimited is the nation's cold-water conservation organization, whose volunteers and staff are dedicated to improving and protecting habitat for cold water species such as salmon and trout. In pursuit of that goal, I am here to state Trout Unlimited's support for SB 1039, being heard before you.

In the 25 years that I have been with Trout Unlimited, I have worked on many issues. Dam removal, forest buffers, land use, culvert replacement, invasive species, hatchery reform, harvest limits, instream flows and much more. But an issue of great concern to me and my organization is what is happening to the ocean. So little of the life of salmon or steelhead in ocean is understood. We don't know very much about negative ocean impacts on salmonids. That is why TU believes it is so important to pass SB 1039, which deals with the negative impact of ocean acidification and hypoxia.

Currently, there is a major concern about the return numbers of Columbia/Snake river summer steelhead which will could back this summer. The numbers predicted are low-especially the Clearwater B run fish, where a projected return prediction is only 750 adults returning. If this down turn continues, we could see this population of summer steelhead, in central Idaho, SE Washington and NE Oregon, go extinct. Steelhead, unlike salmon, travel into the middle of the ocean until they return to their natal streams in adulthood. Ocean acidification could have a negative impact on them and definitely will have an impact on their prey species. So, passing SB 1039, which declares Oregon state policy on ocean acidification and establishes the Oregon Coordinating Council on Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia. This would start us in the right direction on dealing with this issue.

So much money has been spent on restoring and protecting native wild salmon and steelhead in freshwater yet we understand so little about the habitat they spend almost 75% of their life in, the ocean. SB 1039 is a good step in the right direction and Trout Unlimited urges you to pass this bill.

