



Oregon Council Trout Unlimited

Feb. 3,2017

Trout Unlimited testimony in support of SB 3

Chair Dembrow and Committee members-

My name is Tom Wolf and I am here today representing Trout Unlimited, the largest coldwater conservation group in the country, with 3200 members here in Oregon and 160,000 nationwide. My job today is to present Trout Unlimited's support for SB 3 and share some final thoughts on why this bill should be supported by your committee and passed onto Senate floor for a vote. I appreciate the time today you have spent listening to testimony and the time spent reading earlier submitted testimony. As always, I appreciate the hard work and dedication you bring to your job as a legislator, representing your constituents and working for the best results of our wonderful state.

I will be batting cleanup for the conservation, business, fishing and tribal groups who have preceded me. During their testimony facts to support SB 3 have been presented for science, recreational, and economic reasons. My wish is that during this time of testimony by an earnest and knowledgeable cross section of people from different areas of the state, they have answered questions you have had on SB 3. These scientists, anglers, rafters, conservations, tribal members and business owners share one common goal-to pass and implement this bill. In doing so , they know that regulations will be implemented with will limit the negative impacts of recreational suction dredge mining on watersheds. These watersheds are important for the habitat they provide for wild salmon, steelhead, bull trout, lamprey and freshwater mollusks.

Not only do these watersheds provide environmental protection for important ESA listed species but the rivers of Oregon provide many hours of enjoyment for anglers, rafters, kayakers, photographers and many other recreational users. These outdoor enthusiasts, coming from Oregon and all over the world, bring millions of dollars into our state's economy, as has been shared by others testifying before me. Speaking as an ardent fly angler, who has been fishing for almost 60 years, I count myself fortunate to live in a beautiful state like Oregon, with some of the best angling opportunities for native wild trout, steelhead and salmon in the world. I am blessed to have streams like the Rogue, Umpqua, Deschutes and many others to pursue the fantastic sport of fishing, and in the process, I have spent thousands of dollars for Oregon's economy in pursuit of these beautiful wild fish.

What conservations, anglers and others supporting SB 3 are asking is that regulations and rules are set on limiting the negative impacts of recreational suction dredge mining. We are not requesting the elimination of this activity but rather to regulate the negative impacts. We, who support SB 3 and have been working on this issue for many years just ask that rules be set to help protect our streams from an activity which can harm our wonderful streams.

Thank you for this chance to testify before you and I hope that the testimony you have heard in support of SB 3 will compel you to support passing this bill.

Sincerely,

Tom Wolf,  
Executive Director  
Oregon Council Trout Unlimited