



NATIVE FISH SOCIETY

Advancing the Recovery of Native, Wild Fish in Their Homewaters

February 12, 2018

House Committee on Agriculture and National Resources
Representative Brian Clem, Chair
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for House Bill 4015

Dear Chair Clem, Vice-Chairs McLain and Sprenger and members of the Committee:

I'm writing today on behalf of Native Fish Society in support of HB 4015, an act to establish the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund. The Native Fish Society was founded in 1995 by a small group of passionate fly anglers and advocates in Portland, OR and has grown into the leading grassroots, science-based native fish conservation group in the Northwest. Our mission is to utilize the best-available science to advocate for the protection and restoration of wild, native fish and promote the stewardship of the habitats that sustain them.

For too long, the management of Oregon's fish and wildlife has been dependent on unstable and underfunded revenue streams. The result has been the continued decline of many of our native species, including our iconic salmon and steelhead.

Establishing the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund will enable the state to accept moneys allocated by the federal government through the proposed "Recovering America's Wildlife Act" (HR 4647, 115th Congress). And the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund will assist in stabilizing and increasing revenue for the wildlife management agencies and commissions, better allowing them to meet their legal mandates to recover our imperiled fish and wildlife and the habitats upon which they depend.

Native Fish Society expresses our concern regarding the use of moneys from the proposed Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund for management schemes which are not supported by the best available science and which fail to meet the state's conservation needs and goals for threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead.

Specifically, we oppose increased funding for hatchery operations as a method for recovering these species. The peer-reviewed science is clear: hatcheries have a deleterious impact on our

native, wild fish. It is imperative that moneys from the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund do not go toward the hatchery programs that are antithetical to the purposes stated in HB 4015: “to protect, maintain or enhance fish and wildlife resources in Oregon.”

Native Fish Society suggests that moneys from the fund go toward those actions we know to be beneficial in recovering our native, wild fish. These include: increased fish screening, improved fish passage, investment in research, monitoring and enforcement efforts, and commitment to completing conservation planning processes (such as for the Klamath Mountain Province steelhead DPS).

Native Fish Society encourages you to support HB 4015 and asks that you ensure these funds have the greatest possible impact on the recovery of our native, wild fish.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Fairbrother". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Jennifer Fairbrother
Campaigns & Columbia Regional Director