

February 11, 2019

The Honorable Michael Dembrow
Environment and Natural Resources, Chair
900 Court St. NE, S-407



RE: Support Senate Bill 753, Oregon Ocean Science Trust Fund

Dear Senator Dembrow and Environment and Natural Resources Committee Members:

On behalf the Audubon Society of Portland representing over 15,000 members we are writing in support of Senate Bill 753 that provides Oregon's Ocean Science Trust a viable mechanism for generated funds to support needed research in Oregon's Territorial Sea and adjacent coastline.

Oregon's Ocean Science Trust has been in existence for over 5 years but has been hampered by lacking a sufficient mechanism to secure funds to support much needed ocean and coastal research that would help direct needed management by state agencies.

Threats to Oregon's ocean and coastal resources are growing. As highlighted by the Oregon Coordinating Council on Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia Council, OAH events are projected to intensify and threaten our wild fisheries and rich ocean ecosystem. The Council has recommended increased research and monitoring so that impacts can be mitigated and adapted to.

At the same time, there is a paucity of research to evaluate the effectiveness of Oregon's fledgling system of marine reserves and protected areas. While the ODFW Marine Reserves Program has done a great job in implementing ecological and human dimensions monitoring of the reserves to inform the eventual 2023 evaluation, there are many hugely important questions ODFW simply do not have the resources to undertake alone. Front and center is the question of "size and spacing" or "design and placement" of the reserves and what that means for ecological connectivity between the reserves. The research in this area (focused on larval fish dispersal) has been minimal and has been focused on the southernmost reserve at Redfish Rocks. There are other examples of research paucity like this. If we are going to more completely understand the effectiveness of the marine reserves system, more targeted research is needed. An Ocean Science Trust that can be competitive for acquiring funds will ultimately help some of this much needed research to be implemented.

Passage of SB 753 would bring the Oregon Ocean Science Trust closer to the successful California Ocean Science Trust. The California Ocean Science Trust has received significant funding from charitable foundations and businesses since its formation in 2000 leading to a

wealth of targeted research that has informed important management decisions in California. The structure of the California Ocean Science Trust provides the inspiration and model for the Oregon Ocean Science Trust.

Please approve Senate Bill 753 to move the Oregon Ocean Science Trust on a pathway to success so we can more effectively protect Oregon's precious marine resources and habitats.

Thank you for your consideration and leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

Joe Liebezeit, MS, Staff Scientist
Bob Sallinger, Conservation Director
Paul Engelmeyer, Tenmile Creek Sanctuary Manager

Audubon Society of Portland