



**OREGON CHAPTER
OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**
PO Box 2378
Corvallis, OR 97339

Date: March 7, 2019

From: The Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society

To: Members of the House Natural Resource Committee

Subject: Re: Support for HB 2841 (protecting sensitive wildlife location information)

The Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society (ORTWS) is a non-profit professional organization of over 500 wildlife professionals from many areas of public and private enterprise. One of our key goals is to promote the application of sound science in resource management decisions.

On behalf of our Members and Board, we request that you support HB 2841. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) collects and maintains significant data pertaining to the exact location of individuals or sub-populations of fish and wildlife including, 1) radio-collared/tagged animals, 2) sensitive calving/fawning areas, 3) raptor nest sites, and 4) sensitive habitat or micro-sites used as courtship/breeding grounds, denning sites, spawning grounds, and more.

The vast majority of Oregon's hunting and fishing community value ethics and the principles of fair chase. Nevertheless, due to the vulnerable nature of nest sites, breeding grounds, or collared animals; only a few bad actors can produce irrevocable consequences to vulnerable wildlife populations.

Additionally, we suspect parties with financial interests in natural resource industries are the most likely to request and use this data in manner that may jeopardize vulnerable species and habitats of conservation concern.

Finally, we would like to call attention to inter-agency partnerships that form the backbone of conservation work and species recovery projects in particular. The most successful conservation projects usually involve formal partnerships between federal, tribal, and state wildlife agencies. Currently the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and other federal agencies have the statutory authority to limit sensitive data.

If ODFW does not develop commensurate authority to protect sensitive data, federal agencies may reduce the nature and extent of partnerships. This will produce very unfortunate outcomes for conservation in Oregon.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important and nuanced issue effecting conservation in Oregon. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or would like to discuss further.

Regards,

John M. Goodell
President
ORTWS
president@ortws.org