



# OREGON HUNTERS ASSOCIATION

Protecting Oregon's Wildlife, Habitat and Hunting Heritage

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## **Testimony in Support of HB 2829 Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund**

Chair Witt and Members of the House Committee on Natural Resources:

For the record, I am Al Elkins representing the Oregon Hunters Association (OHA). I am here today in support of HB 2829, the bill that establishes the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund (OCRF). The mission of OHA is "protecting Oregon's wildlife, habit and hunting heritage". Our current focus is ensuring sound and scientific management of all huntable wildlife species and we strive to increase hunter access to private lands statewide. In other words, our mission is in line with HB 2829.

In addition to establishing the OCRF, HB 2829 also appropriates \$17 million of general fund monies to improve engagement of the public in hunting and fishing opportunities. The bill also emphasizes the need to improve educational outreach and engagement of the public, related to and in support of healthy wildlife and fish habitats.

Currently the programs in Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) that focus on conservation and management of wildlife, fish and their habitats are funded primarily through fishing and hunting license fees along with federal excise taxes. This makes up more that 50% of the ODFW budget, while less than 8% is made up of monies from the general fund.

While Oregon sportsmen and sportswomen provide the biggest share of funding for Oregon's wildlife and habitat programs, all Oregonians benefit from wildlife and fish conservation. HB 2829 provides the establishment of a fund to assure that all Oregonians and visitors to this state will share the costs of good sound wildlife and fish conservation.

In conclusion, HB 2829 is a good bill for all of Oregon's wildlife, and habitat and will help ensure that Oregonians will be able to enjoy the great outdoors and all it has to offer for a long time.

That concludes my testimony, I will be glad to answer any questions.