



March 14, 2019

Representative Brad Witt, Chair  
Representative Chris Gorsek, Vice-Chair  
Representative Sherrie Sprenger, Vice-Chair  
House Committee on Natural Resources

Re: Trout Unlimited Comments on House Bill 2829

Dear Chair Witt and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on House Bill (HB) 2829. My name is Chandra Ferrari and I represent Trout Unlimited (TU), a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of cold-water fishes, such as trout and salmon, and their habitats. Trout Unlimited has more than 300,000 members and supporters nationwide including over 3,000 in Oregon.

TU supports HB 2829. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) is tasked with many important and varied functions including the conservation and management of fish, wildlife and habitat. ODFW's traditional source of funding (hunting and fishing fees and associated federal excise taxes) is not adequate to meet its needs over the long-term nor equitable as an increasing share of its workload is devoted to protection and management of non-game fish and wildlife. The HB 2402 Task Force on Funding for Fish, Wildlife and Related Recreation and Education (Task Force) was charged with considering more diverse, sustainable sources of revenues for ODFW. Less than 8 percent of the agency's budget comes from the general fund. A main recommendation from the Task Force was the creation of an Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund to provide ODFW with a vehicle to receive revenues dedicated to particular goals, such as implementing the Oregon Conservation and Nearshore Strategies and expanding opportunities for responsible outdoor recreation activities.

HB 2829 establishes the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund (Conservation Fund) along with an Advisory Committee to guide its disbursements. Additionally, HB 2829 allocates 17 million dollars in general fund to the Conservation Fund. This is an important first step toward establishing a more diverse, sustainable funding stream for ODFW. Additionally, it provides a ready mechanism for ODFW to receive federal funds should H.R. 4647 (Recovering America's Wildlife Act) pass. H.R. 4647 could provide Oregon approximately 50 million per biennium to implement conservation actions. However, Oregon would be required to provide a 25% match to access the funds. The establishment of the Conservation Fund and general fund allocation would ensure Oregon is ready to meet this requirement.

Most importantly however, HB 2829 would help ensure that ODFW has sufficient resources to sustainably manage Oregon's fish and wildlife resources into the future. Healthy and sustainable

fish and wildlife populations are critical components of Oregon's environment, economy and way of life.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2829. TU looks forward to engaging in continuing discussions on this legislation.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chandra Ferrari".

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