



Volunteer

14 March 2019

Subject: Testimony before the House Natural Resource Committee - HB 2834

Representative Witt and members of the House Natural Resources Committee

I am David Wiley, a Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation member and volunteer. I live in Sublimity, Oregon.

Today I am speaking for more than 17,000 Oregon Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation members when I say to you on The Elk Foundation supports the wildlife corridor identification and safe wildlife road crossings stated in HB 2834.

ODFW currently has the bill's broad requirements for identification of wildlife connectivity corridors statewide for all species well under way. The magnitude of the research requirement is huge, will be very expressive to accomplish. Currently the work is funded with Wildlife Funds, federal Pitman-Robinson and License and tag fees. The information developed by ODFW in the corridor identification study will guide Oregon Department of Transportation sighting of wildlife crossings structures for major routes; structures designed to reduce deer/elk-vehicle collisions. We argue that the ODFW's works is partially a general public good and therefore use of license and tag fee revenue is beyond the scope for which Wildlife Funds maybe used. HB 2834 provides no General Fund revenue to help pay for the work mandated. We suggest General funds should be provided for in the Bill to pay for a portion of the work deemed a General Public good.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Oregon Department of Transportation have already teamed up and studied the wildlife crossing requirements for Highway 97 south of Bend to reduce vehicle-deer collisions. The information on the project's underpass effectiveness indicates a 85 percent reduction in deer-vehicle strikes in the area of the under pass. By the way, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation has contributed funding to build wing fences on the wildlife underpass ODOT constructed in the Highway 97 improvement project.

Thank you.

Questions?