



## **HB 2829**

### **Testimony of WaterWatch of Oregon By Kimberley Priestley**

**Submitted to the House Committee on Natural Resources  
March 14, 2019**

Founded in 1985, WaterWatch is a non-profit river conservation group dedicated to the protection and restoration of natural flows in Oregon's rivers. We work to ensure that enough water is protected in Oregon's rivers to sustain fish, wildlife, recreation and other public uses of Oregon's rivers, lakes and streams. We also work for balanced water laws and policies. WaterWatch has members across Oregon who care deeply about our rivers, their inhabitants and the effects of water laws and policies on these resources.

#### **WaterWatch supports HB 2829**

HB 2829 establishes the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund, and allocates seventeen million dollars of general fund monies to the Fund.

WaterWatch supports HB 2829. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) plays a vital role in protecting our states many fish and wildlife species, and their varied habitats. ODFW's 2018 Strategic Plan has as its first goal to demonstrate effective stewardship of Oregon's fish and wildlife and their habitats. ODFW's longstanding reliance on revenue from hunting and fishing licenses to fulfill its conservation mandate has not proved adequate. It is time for Oregon to prioritize investment in the protection and restoration of our state's natural environment. Establishment of a Conservation and Recreation fund would move the state in the right direction by allowing greater investment in non-game fish and wildlife management and protection. We urge the Committee to support this bill.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

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