



Protecting clean water and native fish in the waters of the Rogue.

House Committee on Natural Resources
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

March 18, 2019

RE: Support for Public Access to Waterways under HB 2835

Dear Chair Witt, Co-Vice Chairs Gorsek and Sprenger, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of our more than 3,500 members and supporters who enjoy visiting Oregon's iconic rivers like the Rogue, we ask for your support to protect public access to our state's waterways. Across the state, Oregon has more than 1.5 million acres of public waterways, including rivers, lakes, and bays. House Bill 2835 before the committee represents an opportunity to preserve and enhance public access to waterways.

This legislation, as it is to be amended, will preserve and enhance public access to waterways aligned with Oregon's 2017 Integrated Water Resource Strategy by developing a public process through which state agencies engage in a public review of proposed public waterway access closures greater than 30 days in length. Exceptions for emergencies, such as wildfire or critical wildlife and ecological management activities, as well as short-term construction or closures related to site improvements are included in the bill.

Additionally, HB 2835 will require state agencies to develop and release an annual report to the legislature that summarizes the number of public waterway access closures, the rationale behind each closure, and the number and location of new or re-opened public waterway access sites. The legislation will also incorporate the feasibility of public waterway access into new state bridge construction or reconstruction.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment on HB 2835 and we respectfully request your support for efforts to protect and enhance public access to Oregon's waterways.

Sincerely,

Stacey Detwiler
Conservation Director
Rogue Riverkeeper