



March 15, 2019

Senator Kathleen Taylor, Co-Chair
Representative Jeff Reardon, Co-Chair
Ways and Means Sub-Committee on Natural Resources

Testimony in support of SB 5539 and SB 5540: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Budget

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of The Trust for Public Land, I am writing to **support SB 5539 and SB 5540**, which will fund the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) operations and grant programs. These funds are critical to support the protection and restoration of healthy watersheds and natural habitats for future Oregonians.

The Trust for Public Land is a national nonprofit with a mission of creating parks and protecting land for people. We work with communities around the state to conserve land ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. Every park, open space and natural area we protect is an open invitation to explore, wonder and connect with nature. We're proud to say that we've been connecting communities to the outdoors—and to each other—since 1972.

As a member of the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts we are part of a network of local conservation organizations that partner with landowners to protect and improve our valuable natural resources. We leverage OWEB funding with private and federal funding sources to ensure the long-term stewardship of lands and to ensure OWEB's investments are benefiting Oregonians in perpetuity.

The Trust for Public Land supports the Governor's Recommended Budget for OWEB.

OWEB's grant program is unique in the nation because it fuels conservation organizations like ours that work with willing landowners from the ground up to achieve statewide initiatives like the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds and the Oregon Conservation Strategy. We urge you to support **SB 5539 and SB 5540**.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristin", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kristin Kovalik, Director of Land Protection
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