

From: chuck50fis@aol.com
To: [Exhibits HAGLU](#)
Subject: HB 2438
Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2019 2:06:47 PM

House Agriculture and Land Use Committee,

I am a former district director with my local Soil and Water Conservation District and a current associate director. On many occasions the district has commented on local land use and DSL permits with potential effects on soil and water including wetlands. When a project is going to have loss of wetlands and no suitable mitigation sites are found, the applicant may propose to provide payment in lieu to DSL to compensate for the loss of wetlands. Payment in lieu is designed to contribute to functions and values within the watershed when mitigation is not an option. I have concerns about how this will be met in a region that is short on wetlands in the first place and question how DSL will mitigate the loss of wetlands now and in the future

That is why I am writing to express support for House Bill 2438 (2019) which directs DSL to conduct a study on wetland mitigation banks and credits across the state. I believe Hood River County would be a great place to study wetland mitigation, due to the rapid pace of development and because virtually all the buildable industrial lands left in the county involve wetlands. The current process does not seem to be working to retain function and viability of wetlands in Hood River County, nor does it recognize the positive benefits of wetlands to the Hood River Valley.

As a long time involved member of the local watershed council and due to its strong partnerships with other land and water agencies and conservation groups, and recent conversations around the need for wetland mitigation in Hood River County, there is a lot that could be learned here. I want to see something that will benefit the resource as well as economic development both now and in the future.

I cannot speak for the SWCD nor the watershed council but, I believe they would welcome the opportunity to be involved in the study.

Thank you for allowing me to comment on the bill.

Sincerely,

Chuck Gehling
Hood River, Oregon