



May 6 2019

Senate Committee On Natural Resources
Chair Senator Dembrow, Vice Chair Senator Olsen, Members of the Committee
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: SUPPORT FOR HB 2835A-A4

Chair Senator Dembrow, Vice Chair Senator Olsen, Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Oregon Outdoors, I write today in support of HB 2835A-A4. Oregon Outdoors (www.oregonoutdoors.org) is a recently-established and rapidly growing coalition of more than thirty outdoor recreation businesses, recreation organizations, and conservation groups committed to the preservation of Oregon's outdoor assets for future generations.

Our coalition has established legislative priorities that members have determined fit several components of Oregon's outdoor industry that are of particular importance to the coalition and represent our collective voice and long terms interests for the future of the industry in our state. These priorities include, but are not limited to: outdoor recreation access, recreation infrastructure, economic vitality, and support for responsible recreation.

HB 2835A-A4 will preserve and enhance public access to publicly owned waterways by:

- Creating a public process through which state agencies would engage in a public review process for public waterway access closures greater than 30 days in length. The legislation allows for exceptions for emergencies such as wildfire and for critical wildlife and ecological management activities, as well as for short-term construction and/or site improvement related closures.
- Requiring state agencies to produce an annual report to the legislature that includes the number of waterway access sites that have been closed by state agencies and the reasons for each closure as well as the number and locations of new/re-opened public access sites.
- Enhancing public access to public waterways by incorporating an access feasibility assessment into new state bridge construction projects. While not obligating state agencies to make improvements, this would encourage interagency coordination on access projects where access improvements opportunities are identified.

Public lands and waterways are the backbone of our rapidly growing outdoor industry, and without well-managed and appropriate access to these resources, the industry could not thrive as it does today. Communities across Oregon recognize that outdoor recreation supports health, contributes to a high quality of life and—perhaps most importantly— attracts and sustains employers and families. Investing in outdoor infrastructure and access attracts employers and active workforces, ensuring that those communities thrive economically and socially.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2835A - A4.

Sincerely,

Hugh Morrison

Hugh Morrison
Network Coordinator
Oregon Outdoors

Oregon Outdoors Members



outdoor project



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