



**OREGON CHAPTER  
OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**  
PO Box 2378  
Corvallis, OR 97339

Date: March 21, 2019

From: The Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society

To: Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

**Subject: Support for HB 2841 with -9 Amendments** (protecting sensitive wildlife location information)

The Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society (ORTWS) is a non-profit professional organization of over 500 wildlife professionals from many areas of public and private enterprise. One of our key goals is to promote the application of sound science in resource management decisions.

On behalf of our Members and Board, we request that you support HB 2841 with the -9 amendments.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) collects and maintains significant data pertaining to the exact location of individuals or sub-populations of fish and wildlife including; 1) radio-collared/tagged animals, 2) sensitive calving/fawning areas, 3) raptor nest sites, and 4) sensitive habitat or micro-sites used as courtship/breeding grounds, denning sites, spawning grounds, and more. Such data is generally collected under strict scientific protocols, and a key tenet of that data collection is the underlying and longstanding principle that data collected for research and management purposes does not in itself put individual animals or populations at risk. However, in today's era of instant and widespread communication of information, wildlife location information requested and gained by individuals can have serious unintended negative effects on the very fish and wildlife that the ODFW is charged with conserving and managing.

Inter-agency partnerships form the backbone of conservation work and species recovery projects in particular. The most successful conservation projects usually involve formal partnerships between federal, tribal, and state wildlife agencies. Currently the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and other federal agencies have the statutory authority to limit sensitive data. If ODFW does not develop commensurate regulations, federal agencies may reduce the nature and extent of partnerships involving sensitive data. This will produce very unfortunate outcomes for conservation in Oregon.

We are aware that the ODFW receives many requests for fish and wildlife data from a variety of sources and for an even wider number of reasons. We strongly support this bill's concept that the ODFW needs the ability to restrict public disbursement of location data of sensitive fish and wildlife species in situations where the release of that data may cause harm to a species. This bill, while somewhat complicated in its formulation, provides needed protections to fish and wildlife while continuing to

allow the ODFW to continue to work with its partners and fulfill its obligations to Oregon's public. **Although not contained specifically within the HB 2841 and the -9, the ORTWS also supports the concept of periodic or future review of the policy set out in HB 2841 and the -9 amendments as well.**

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important issue affecting fish and wildlife conservation in Oregon. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or would like to discuss further.

Respectfully,

ORTWS Board of Directors

ORTWS Contacts for HB 2841-A:

Chris Parta, ORTWS Legislative Liaison [chris@partaoregon.com](mailto:chris@partaoregon.com)

Russ Morgan, ORTWS Legislative Co-Chair [russmorgan@ortws.org](mailto:russmorgan@ortws.org)