

From the Desk of Sen. Dembrow
[Signature]



VOTE "YES" ON HB 2841 Protect Sensitive Wildlife Location Information

Please support HB 2841 to protect Oregon's natural resources and Oregonians' tax dollars.

HB 2841 is a narrowly crafted measure that will address Oregon's growing poaching problem and protect taxpayer investments in research, monitoring and wildlife management. The bill establishes parameters for the protection of sensitive wildlife location data collected by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) for research and wildlife management for species that are especially vulnerable to poaching and harassment.

HB 2841 preserves access to such sensitive information for governmental, educational, tribal entities, farmers and landowners as well as other ODFW management partners and other stakeholders who need this information to make management and livelihood decisions. It strikes a balance between protecting the location of vulnerable individuals and populations of a species from poachers and others with malicious intent, while ensuring that the information remains accessible to those who need it.

Poaching in Oregon is a Growing Problem and Public Access to Sensitive Location Information of Wildlife Species Makes Them Vulnerable to Poaching

- During the 2018 hunting season, troopers working the greater Yamhill and Washington county areas seized 27 firearms used in illegal activity; 16 of those individuals shot a Wildlife Enforcement Decoy at night. Poaching data for deer and elk from 2015 indicate nearly 500 deer and more than 200 elk were killed illegally in Oregon.
- Currently, anyone can access sensitive wildlife location data, including radio collar information and location of breeding or nesting sites. This makes individuals that are radio-collared, or monitored in other ways, vulnerable to poaching and other means of harm or harassment.
- For species that reuse breeding or nesting sites throughout their life, the current policy compromises their safety year after year. Additionally, certain species tend to stay in groups or aggregate during certain life stages and identifying the location of one individual could compromise tens or hundreds of other individuals.
- Wildlife research and monitoring requires a large investment of resources by ODFW. Failure to protect information collected through tools such as radio collars is a waste of taxpayer dollars.

HB 2841 adds a narrow exemption to the Public Records Act so that sensitive wildlife location information may be withheld if it poses risk to an individual or a population of a fish or wildlife species

- ODFW will continue to share such data with management partners, landowners, farmers and other stakeholders as they currently do.
- This applies to data at a resolution that will identify location of an individual or a habitat. It does not apply to aggregated data at a species level.