

From the Desk of  
Representative  
Marty Wilde

*Marshall L. Wilde*

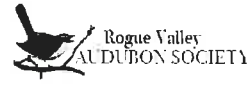


**Willamette  
RIVERKEEPER**



Lane  
County  
Audubon  
Society

Corvallis, Oregon



## VOTE NO ON HB 2437

Our collective groups urge you to reject HB 2437A. While we understand the desire for a removal/fill process for agricultural drainage activities that will lead to a more workable process and increased compliance, HB 2437A puts Oregon's wetlands and streams at serious risk. Major concerns with HB 2437A include:

**Allows removal of up to 3,000 cubic yards of material from Oregon's streams without a permit:** This bill grants an exemption from removal fill permits for the removal of up to 3,000 cubic yards of material per linear mile from "traditionally maintained channels" over a five year period. Traditionally maintained channels are not limited to ditches, but include intermittent and perennial streams (when dry). This is a 5,900% increase over current law (50 cubic yard exemption).

**Allows placement of up to 3,000 cubic yards on wetlands without a permit:** The bill allows the placement of up to 3,000 cubic yards of material removed during maintenance onto wetlands for up to one year. This is not limited to "converted wetlands" (current law) but includes any vibrant, thriving wetland. This undermines decades of work to strengthen Oregon's wetland laws, regulations and wetland restoration work.

**Puts intermittent streams across the landscape at risk:** This bill is not limited to man-made irrigation ditches, but allows removal of stream material from intermittent streams. Of the 300,878 miles of linear streams in Oregon, 71 percent (213,327 miles) are intermittent or ephemeral. While HB 2437A does strip out Essential Salmonid Habitat (ESH), ESH only covers approximately 8.1% of intermittent streams. This leaves many of Oregon's intermittent streams at risk under this bill.

**No public notice or comment:** This bill does not allow for public notice and comment. The waters of this state belong to all citizens of Oregon, but this process ensures that citizens have no voice in the possible destruction of our state's most treasured resources. The bill also fails to require notice to the Department of Environmental Quality, federal agencies, tribes and local governments, all of whom would get notice under current removal fill permit processing requirements for projects over 50 cubic yards.

**Taxpayers will pay for this program while farmers pay zero:** In a budget climate where many important natural resource agency POPs that would benefit all Oregonians are remaining unfunded, this bill would allocate nearly \$700,000 of general funds to a program that benefits a select few.

The recently released United Nations Biodiversity Report found that over one million species are threatened with extinction, in part because 85% of the world's wetlands have been lost to human development and 75% of the world's freshwater resources are impacted by agriculture. Oregon should be passing laws to protect our ecologically and economically valuable wetlands and streams, not passing laws that will fast track their further destruction.

JUN 17 2019



**PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 2437**

Audubon Society of Portland  
The Wetlands Conservancy  
WaterWatch of Oregon  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Central Oregon LandWatch  
Native Fish Society  
Oregon Natural Desert Association  
Oregon Wild  
Sierra Club, Oregon Chapter  
Willamette Riverkeeper  
KS Wild  
Rogue Riverkeeper  
The Conservation Angler  
Cascadia Wildlands  
Oregon Coast Alliance  
Urban Greenspaces Institute  
Kalmiopsis Audubon Society  
Umpqua Valley Audubon Society  
Audubon Society of Corvallis  
East Cascades Audubon Society  
Lane County Audubon Society  
Rogue Valley Audubon Society  
Salem Audubon Society