

HB 3150 3-17-21

HB 3150 is what South Coast area anglers, businesses, and public agencies want for their citizens. The South Coast and Oregonians in general, have witnessed the slow erosion of angler harvest opportunity. When you combine this with the attitudes and actions of ODFW that illustrate their belief that hatchery fish are a threat to the viability of our wild fish, HB 3150 is viewed as the last chance grasp for what may be the last tool in the tool box to return the lost privileges of harvest and wild fish enhancement propagation programs that were at one time, part of the south coast communities heritage and economy.

Some of the momentum for this bill has been the result of the very methodical elimination of wild winter steelhead harvest. There is a proposal in a draft plan for the south coast that if finalized, will result in the South Coast District only having 4 streams left for the harvest of wild winter steelhead. ODFW will tell us that harvest is not a threat to the viability of these fish, but Political Advocacy Scientists are recommending this because of the social impacts to the region.

Additionally, the plan if finalized, will recommend that the vast majority of the south Coast District be set aside as a wild fish quarantine, creating a huge area that will result in making it nearly impossible to implement any future wild fish propagation programs. For example; The south coast district has only one very small winter steelhead hatchery program. This program is on the Chetco river and hatchery introgression is allowed on less than 10% of the entire river basin!
The state is taking away harvest and not replacing it with hatchery programs. This is a systemic problem throughout the state.

We will agree with ODFW that south coast juvenile density studies indicate that south coast streams are at or near carrying capacity for anadromous fish, and are perhaps the highest in the state, but with the looming threat of losing our ability for any future fish propagation, HB 3150 provides more benefits as another tool in the tool box.

Leonard Krug
President, Oregon Anglers Alliance