



March 17, 2021

Representative Ken Helm, Chair
House Committee on Water

Re: Support for House Bill 3103-1

Dear Chair Helm and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on the -1 amendment to House Bill (HB) 3103. My name is Chandra Ferrari and I represent Trout Unlimited (TU), a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of cold-water fishes, such as trout and salmon, and their habitats. Trout Unlimited has more than 300,000 members and supporters nationwide including over 3,000 in Oregon.

HB 3103-1 clarifies that the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) has the authority to authorize changes to the character of use of water that is stored pursuant to a primary storage right. There is broad recognition that this change is necessary to help facilitate water management solutions in watersheds throughout the State and would have benefits for instream and out-of-stream uses. The OWRD has historically allowed changes in character of use of stored water and to date has approved over two hundred applications to do so. However, there is currently legal ambiguity around whether OWRD has this authority and therefore a statutory technical fix is necessary. Accordingly, TU supports HB 3103-1 as it simply clarifies OWRD's authority to authorize changes to the character of use of water that is already being stored pursuant to a primary storage right.

For the last several years, TU has actively participated in stakeholder discussions concerning broader changes to storage transfer statutes. The broader storage transfer discussions are complicated. While past discussions did enjoy some level of progress, more time is needed to facilitate a broadly supported resolution. TU is actively committed to continuing these discussions to reach resolution on the broader issues but believes the widely supported technical fix proposed in HB 3103-1 should move forward now. We look forward to continuing to engage in constructive discussions on these issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chandra Ferrari".

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