

I am opposed to denying the opportunity to require individuals who either fail to comply with a removal/fill permit or fail to obtain one to restore and improve wetland in the event they are caught.

1. There is no deterrent effect when the worst that will happen is if a person gets caught, they will only have to return the area to the condition it was in prior to their actions.
2. Wetlands are considered the most important habitat in the state according to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.
3. Over 2/3 of Oregon wildlife rely upon these areas at least part of the time.
4. Wetlands perform multiple functions including screening pollutants out of water prior to it entering a waterway, and serving as a reservoir which store water and release it into streams and springs during times of drought.
5. It takes time to restore wetlands that are damaged through irresponsible actions of individuals removing or placing soils into the areas.

It is good public policy to require a net improvement of damaged areas. Irresponsible removal or fill actions reduce or eliminate the benefits of the wetlands during the time they are recovering. Requiring wetland enhancement provides a reasonable amount of mitigation to compensate for the periods when the benefits of the wetlands are compromised.