



**The House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources: HB 3187
Chair Brad Witt, Vice-Chair Breese-Iverson and Hudson, and Members of the Committee**

Statement of Opposition to HB 3187 from The Conservation Angler

HB 3187 would establish the Oregon Wildlife Council within the Oregon Department of Fish and wildlife, creating and funding new provisions whose objectives that can be achieved through existing processes.

TCA opposes this bill because there is no specific evidence that the work proposed is not already being accomplished by ODFW as already required and achieved by multiple programs by ODFW as it executes its existing mission.

The bill duplicates the Fish & Wildlife Commission's mission and duties and is overly constrictive and nonrepresentative and it ignores important aspects of the Commission's mission. Creation of this council will most likely detract from primary ODFW duties to manage wildlife for all Oregonians.

ODFW spends a lot of money and staff time working to recruit new hunters and anglers and already has demonstratable results for these efforts.

The total number of people who hunt and fish is growing, but when compared to population growth, the proportion of hunters and anglers is declining to low levels. This has to do with changing demographics, the availability of many new sports and pursuits of all sorts, and it has to do with the very real declines in Oregon's native fish and wildlife – a result of ongoing habitat destruction and modification due in large part to the overall increase in Oregonians – who were born here or moved here.

What must be extremely exciting for ODFW are the number of people engaging with the agency who do not hunt or fish. An entire new constituency is coming to ODFW for their expertise in butterflies, beavers, songbirds, and a host of other wildlife species that are not hunted or fished. These people – a majority of Oregonians – are not represented on this proposed council.

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission's predominant duty is to prevent the serious depletion of any wildlife species – this overarching mission precedes the duty to provide optimum levels of use and enjoyment – for present and future Oregonians. It is a really a three-legged conservation mission – prevent serious depletion – provide the most appropriate use and enjoyment – for present and future citizens.

HB 3187 creates an unequal playing field at ODFW, duplicates well-established initiatives and spends a lot of money to do so.

Here is an example of how existing ODFW programs work – when my son showed an interest in hunting when he was 11 – rekindling one of my childhood pursuits – I enrolled him in a hunter safety class, and after successful completion of that step, we took part in specific ODFW youth hunting orientations for pheasants and ducks – both on ODFW Wildlife properties on Sauvie Island – and what followed was a decade of father and son bird hunting trips – on Sauvie Island and in the high country above the desert rivers we had already been floating during steelhead and trout fishing trips.

ODFW helped us do this – and without a council envisioned by HB 3187.

Please vote No on HB 3187 and ask the proponents to engage the Fish and Wildlife Commission