

Public Testimony
Ways and Means Committee District 4
April 22, 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Kirk Blaine and I am a resident of Douglas County.

I ask the Joint Ways and Means committee to focus their attention and investment of state funds towards the wild native fish of Oregon. These fish drive our economy in Douglas county bringing in dollars from around the country, to help our communities.

There are multiple ways the state can invest in wild fish. First, direct funding towards Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Native Fish Conservation Policy. Second, fund monitoring for wild fish species to better understand population health and factors that are limiting these fish from reaching full abundance. Third, fund habitat investments that help with spawning rearing and cold water refuge, areas that are critical to survival in the present face of climate change. We are consistently seeing higher water temperatures and lower flows in the summer months, two factors that are very detrimental to wild native fish in our region.

Summer Steelhead in the North Umpqua Basin are showing consistent declines. Investing in monitoring and population health for these wild fish will help understand the opportunities to redirect and promote historical abundance in this cherished river.

I want to finish by asking you to fully fund the proposed Habitat Division proposed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Please ensure they have the resources necessary to complete the wild fish monitoring programs that are necessary for wild fish management.

Again thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to seeing a strong investment toward the future of the wild fish of Oregon.