



**ROCKY MOUNTAIN  
ELK FOUNDATION**

Testimony Before Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources

May 3, 2021

Subject: HB 5009 – Relating to the Financial Administration of the State Department of Fish and Wildlife

Co-Chair Senator Taylor, Co-Chair Representative Reardon and members of the Committee,

My name is Bill Richardson, and I live southwest of Philomath, Oregon. I am the Oregon and Washington Senior Lands Program Manager for the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and I am speaking today on the Foundations behalf.

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation is a national non-profit conservation organization whose mission is to ensure the future of elk, other wildlife, their habitat, and our hunting heritage. The Elk Foundation also works to open, secure, and improve public access for hunting, fishing, and other recreation.

I am here today to visit about the Minam River Acquisition:

- RMEF and ODFW have been working on an exciting land acquisition opportunity in Northeast Oregon
- The two phased project will acquire 15,573 acres of critical fish and wildlife habitat and establish the Minam River Wildlife Area to be managed by ODFW
- If approved by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission, the first phase of the acquisition will close in late 2021 and be funded by RMEF donations as well as ODFW's federal Pittman-Robertson funds
- Our understanding is the current Department budget does not include spending limitation for this acquisition; we request that this committee ensure that there is adequate limitation in the Department's budget to ensure that this acquisition is possible in the 21-23 biennium.


I want to thank the committee and legislators for their good work on HB 5009 and thank both the legislature and ODFW for their partnership. I look forward to the Minam Wildlife Area providing habitat for fish and wildlife, and recreation opportunities for Oregon's public.

Bill Richardson | Oregon and Washington Senior Lands Program Manager  
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Thank you for the opportunity to voice our support for ODFW's budget and the Minam River Acquisition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Richardson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Bill Richardson  
Oregon & Washington Sr. Lands Program Manager  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation