



COALITION OF OREGON LAND TRUSTS

511 SE MORRISON ST. PORTLAND, OR 97214 • OREGONLANDTRUSTS.ORG

February 11, 2021

Testimony in support of HB 2171- Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund

To the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources:

The Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts (COLT) is the central voice for 29 organizations in Oregon that work to conserve land and connect people to nature. Our mission is to serve and strengthen the land trust community of Oregon. The work of COLT and our member organizations ensure that Oregon's natural systems, watersheds and recreational lands are protected for future generations.

COLT strongly supports HB 2171 to remove the sunset date for the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund (ORCF) and associated Advisory Committee, and restore the State's match commitment of \$1M to advance conservation and recreation projects across Oregon.

The ORCF was established to implement the Oregon Conservation Strategy and enhance opportunities for outdoor recreation. In Oregon there is a growing need to support conservation work that engages our diverse communities in authentic ways. The ORCF represents a unique opportunity invest in fish and wildlife protection while strengthening community connections to nature. Over the past year, the ORCF Advisory Committee has done an excellent job developing a grant program that lifts up community-based projects from all regions of Oregon. Projects include community beaver surveys on the coast (The Wetlands Conservancy), a new program to build awareness of natural areas in Lents (Lents Youth Initiative), and the construction of a wildlife underpass in Gilchrest (Oregon Hunters Association).

In 2019 the Oregon Legislature created this program with a promise of providing a \$1M General Fund match to private donations to this program. Over the past two years Oregonians have demonstrated their commitment to Oregon's special resources by donating nearly \$250,000 from more than 15,000 individuals. HB 2127 would restore the State's investment in the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund and leverage the commitment and talent of our States conservation community.

Our collective work can champion positive change, unite more people for conservation and protect the spectacular state we call home. Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of HB 2171.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelley Beamer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kelley Beamer, Executive Director (COLT)

23 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS: BLUE MOUNTAIN LAND TRUST CENTER FOR NATURAL LANDS MANAGEMENT
COLUMBIA LAND TRUST DESCHUTES LAND TRUST DUCKS UNLIMITED FRIENDS OF THE COLUMBIA GORGE LAND TRUST
FOREST PARK CONSERVANCY GREENBELT LAND TRUST KLAMATH LAKE LAND TRUST LOWER NEHALEM COMMUNITY TRUST
MCKENZIE RIVER TRUST NORTH COAST LAND CONSERVANCY NORTHWEST RANGELAND TRUST OREGON DESERT LAND TRUST
PACIFIC FOREST TRUST SOUTHERN OREGON LAND CONSERVANCY THE CONSERVATION FUND THE NATURE CONSERVANCY IN OREGON
THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND THE WETLANDS CONSERVANCY WALLOWA LAND TRUST WESTERN RIVERS CONSERVANCY
WILD RIVERS LAND TRUST **6 ASSOCIATE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS:** CLACKAMAS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
EAST MULTNOMAH SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT HELVETIA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OREGON AGRICULTURAL TRUST
TUALATIN SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT YAMHILL SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT