



February 10, 2022

Representative Ken Helm, Chair  
Representative Susan McLain, Vice-Chair  
Representative Mark Owens, Vice-Chair  
House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, and Water

Re: Trout Unlimited Supports House Bill 4061-1

Dear Chair Helm, Vice Chairs McLain and Owens, and Members of the Committee,

Trout Unlimited (“TU”) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of cold-water fish (such as trout, salmon, and steelhead) and their habitats. The organization has more than 350,000 members and supporters nationwide, including many members in Oregon. TU and its members are committed to caring for Oregon rivers and streams so future generations can experience the joy of wild and native trout and salmon.

**TU supports HB 4061-1.**

The illegal cannabis industry in Oregon is causing significant harm to streams, fish, riparian habitats, and ground water resources. Many of these operations divert water from streams and wells without a water right. The problem has received important press coverage recently that illustrates how pervasive these operations are in parts of our state, particularly in southern Oregon (*see, e.g.*, Julie Sabatier, [Southern Oregon’s illegal cannabis woes draw national coverage](#), OPB, Jan. 25, 2022; Felisa Rogers, [‘Something’s not right in southern Oregon’: alarm at rise of illegal pot farms](#), The Guardian, Jan. 12, 2022).

TU expects this legislation to increase the tools available to the State of Oregon in addressing these problems. We also supported a few of the additional enforcement authorities included in the original version of the bill or the Legislative Concept that preceded it (i.e., LC 164), but which are not included in the “-1” amendments. TU encourages the legislature and Oregon Water Resources Department to continue its discussion and refinement of those other enforcement and penalty provisions for consideration in future legislative sessions.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on this legislation, and please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

James Fraser  
Oregon Policy Advisor  
Trout Unlimited  
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