

Submitter: Alijana Fisher

On Behalf  
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and  
Water

Measure: HB3159

Date: February 27, 2023

To: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

RE: HB 3159 - Recovering Oregon's Wildlife Fund

Seeing a bald eagle soaring overhead, a pika scampering between rocks or a salmon leaping out of frothing water as a kid was always the highlight of any outdoor excursion, and still is to this day. Now as a recent graduate of Willamette University where I studied environmental science, coupled with a newfound passion for birding, I know how wildlife are interconnected with healthy ecosystems. Of course, as a kid I understood that wildlife deserved to thrive for their own sake, but now that I am older I also understand how species of an ecosystem fit together into a complete whole. Making sure that species thrive is not only the right thing to do, but also ensures that ecosystems don't collapse. I don't want to imagine the dystopian world that would exist without pollinators, or salmon, or any number of other vital species.

Future generations deserve to feel the same joy that I did as a kid while exploring the natural world. However, one third of all plant and animal species are at risk of being lost forever and the extinction crisis is very real and present. In Oregon there are 294 species at risk of extinction, but the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife simply does not have the funds to support their recovery. Now is the time for swift and bold action to recover species in Oregon. If we act now we can save species before it's too late and they are gone forever. That's why I support the Recovering Oregon's Wildlife Fund, HB3159.

This bill uses a 1.5% increase in the state transient lodging tax to generate around \$30 million annually to pay for wildlife conservation, which is a clear and smart link. As the tourism industry grows in Oregon, so does the impact and stress on natural resources and wildlife. In order to support thriving tourism in Oregon, it is vital to invest back into a principle reason why people travel to and around the state in the first place. It's time to invest in wildlife recovery.

Please vote YES on HB 3159 - Recovering Oregon's Wildlife Fund.

Thank you for taking my comments into consideration.

Sincerely,  
Alijana Fisher