

Submitter: Chris Workman

On Behalf
Of:

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

Measure: HB2238

Wetlands are an important component of the ecosystem found in Oregon and should be protected; however, not all wetlands are considered significant. Many wetlands, in fact, especially those located on the valley floor that have been planted and harvested as farmland for the past century or more provide very little ecological or environmental benefit. regardless, they still require a property owner to go through the same process for removal/fill. The cost of a wetland fill/removal application is much greater than the application fee alone. Property owners must hire an environmental consultant to completed a wetland delineation study. Even for a small piece one-acre piece of property this could cost between \$3000-\$5000. The consultant is commonly required to help answer the technical and detailed questions in the application itself, including the extensive alternatives analysis. This costs the property owner another \$2000-\$4000. If approved, the final decision most commonly requires the property owner to pay into a mitigation bank for every square foot of wetland on their property that must be mitigated. Currently, this is at a cost of around \$98,000 per acre. All of these costs, in addition to the actual application fee, must be paid to successfully submit and navigate this complex application process and wetland mitigation before any actual development can take place.

Considering the housing deficit the State faces, I stronger urge the Committee to discourage any effort to increase the cost of the wetland fill/removal permit which has a direct impact on the cost of developing housing in Oregon.