



To: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Chair Helm
Vice-Chair Hartman
Vice-Chair Owens
Representative Boice
Representative Gamba
Representative Levy
Representative Marsh
Representative McLain
Representative Scharf

From: Caylin Barter, Oregon Water Policy Program

Date: March 7, 2023

RE: Comments on HB 3163 – Amendments Needed to Align with HB 5006 Workgroup Final Report

Chair Helm, Vice-Chairs Hartman and Owens, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 3163. Wild Salmon Center supports the concept of place-based planning, and with amendments that align the bill with prior efforts, we will be in a position to support this bill as well.

Wild Salmon Center is an international nonprofit headquartered in Oregon that has work with local partners for three decades to protect and restore the strongest remaining runs of Wild Pacific Salmon. We use science to drive policy, lead planning processes, and support implementation, and we believe that place-based planning has an important role to play in the recovery of our iconic wild fish. We appreciate the effort the Oregon Water Resources Department has invested in this program and this bill. As amendments are considered, I would like to highlight four main points.

We are a charter signatory of the Mid Coast Water Planning Partnership, one of four pilot planning processes selected by the Oregon Water Resources Department to engage in state-supported place-based integrated water resources planning. We have been involved in the Partnership for three years now, and we continue to participate to prioritize actions in our state-recognized action plan. The lessons learned, and continuing to be learned, about the Mid Coast's water reality AND about the persistent unmet capacity needs for agency participation and community engagement are well-captured in the evaluation of the pilot phase that was completed by the National Policy Consensus Center and the OSU Cooperative Extension.

I was also one of the 30 diverse water stakeholders appointed to serve on the yearlong HB 5006 workgroup convened "to develop a framework and path for state-supported water planning and management at the water region and/or basin level." I am proud of what we accomplished as a group and of the common ground we found on our consensus recommendations. All 22 workgroup recommendations were robustly debated prior to inclusion in our final report. Several recommendations now being proposed were also robustly debated, yet failed to gain traction in the workgroup and were rejected. Out of respect for the thousands of collective hours invested in good faith to chart a path for the next phase of place-based planning, I implore you to follow that path with care.

INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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I support the concept of place based integrated water resources planning, with improved funding for state agency capacity and resources for water data, interagency coordination, and participation, and expanded support for transparent and inclusive community engagement. Notably, these were the top overarching recommendations from the HB 5006 Workgroup Final Report. I participated in multiple stakeholder meetings convened last summer by OWRD to discuss the Place Based Planning LC, which was filed before the workgroup concluded. My understanding at the conclusion of that process was that the LC language was intended to be a placeholder that would need to be amended to reflect the HB 5006 workgroup's findings.

I want to point to [proposed redline amendments](#) in the record that were collaboratively developed by Wild Salmon Center, Trout Unlimited, WaterWatch, and The Nature Conservancy – groups deeply involved in various types of place based water planning throughout the state. We believe these specific amendments will bring the bill into alignment with the workgroup final report and Oregon's integrated water resources strategy, and enable our support.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 3163.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Caylin Barter', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Caylin Barter
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