

Submitter: Debra Foster
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: HB3382

This bill would severely weaken state and local land use regulations on port projects within or adjacent to federal navigation channels on the Willamette River, Columbia River, Yaquina Bay, and Coos Bay. These are some of the most ecologically important and sensitive waterways in our state. This bill would open the door to completely unchecked dredging and heavy industrial development on port-owned lands, with zero regard to ecological or human impacts.

This effort to eviscerate Oregon's 50-plus year old system of land use regulations stems from a recent ruling by the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) that found serious deficiencies in the plan for dredging the Coos Bay navigation channel. Rather than redrawing the plan to comply with reasonable and long-standing regulations, out-of-state developers are now trying to burn the whole system down and do whatever they please with our public land, while putting our natural ecosystems at risk.

Please do not give ports a blank check to defile our submerged and submersible state lands. If a development project is truly in the best interest of all Oregonians, it should at the very least demonstrate compliance with the established rules and procedures.

Keep the rules in place to protect our precious wildlife and their rapidly vanishing habitat. If you won't value wildlife or recognize their inalienable right to thrive, then remember that our survival is inextricably linked with theirs. We depend on thriving and diverse ecosystems that support wildlife. When we jeopardize that, we're jeopardizing our own survival. We survive and thrive only when the natural world around us is able to do the same. Stop the destruction of our environment.