



To: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water (HALUNRAW)
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 14, 2023

RE: Comments on HB 3100 – Support for Amendments

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 3100. Wild Salmon Center supports Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRs) and advocates for its coordinated and effective implementation. While we do not support the bill as introduced, with incorporation of [amendments offered by Representative Helm](#) as meeting materials for the HALUNRAW meeting on March 9th and further enhancements to increase community engagement, we will be in a position to support HB 3100.

Wild Salmon Center is an international nonprofit headquartered in Oregon that has worked 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 integrated water resources planning has an important role to play in the recovery of our iconic wild fish. We appreciate the effort the Oregon Water Resources Department and sister agencies have invested in developing and refining the IWRs over the past decade-plus, and we eagerly anticipate the next regular update.

Numerous processes have pointed to the value of the IWRs, and also to the challenges in implementing it. Three recurrent roadblocks have been identified: data, agency capacity, and community engagement.

Wild Salmon Center has firsthand experience with these challenges. We are charter signatories 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. The lessons learned, and continuing to be learned, about the Mid Coast's water reality AND about the persistent unmet capacity needs for water data, 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." Our final workgroup report released in December 2022 includes 22 recommendations, three of which are overarching principles: (1) the need for improved funding for state agency capacity and resources for water data; (2) the need for greater interagency coordination and participation; and (3) the need for expanded support for transparent and inclusive community engagement.

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These persistent challenges can be overcome with targeted investments and thoughtful statutory enhancements. We believe the amendments offered will enhance Oregon's integrated water resources strategy, increase the pace and scale of its implementation, improve outcomes for families, fish, and farms—and enable our support for HB 3100.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit testimony.

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

Caylin Barter
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