



**OREGON  
WILD**

Protecting Oregon's wildlands, wildlife, and waters since 1974.

Date: March 29, 2023

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

RE: **HB 3086 - State Fish and Wildlife Commission Structure**

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My name is Danielle Moser and I am the Wildlife Program Manager for Oregon Wild - an organization with 20,000 members and supporters from across the state.

We urge you to oppose HB 3086 and instead, move forward with the -1 or -3 amendment.

Oregon Wild advocates for maintaining the existing Fish and Wildlife Commission structure, which is based on proportional representation to ensure that the public interest in fish, wildlife, and habitat will remain represented equitably.

According to the state's Handbook for Boards and Commissions, members are appointed to serve the public at large. The concerns and points of view of all interested parties must be represented and considered, but ultimately, the primary responsibility of every board or commission member is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the general public.

For the Fish and Wildlife Commission specifically, the enabling language (ORS 496.090(6)) states: "All members of the commission shall represent the public interest of the state and make decisions affecting the wildlife resources of the state for the benefit of those resources."

Additionally, the state's wildlife policy (ORS 496.012) explains: "It is the policy of the State of Oregon that wildlife shall be managed to prevent serious depletion of any indigenous species and to provide the optimum recreational and aesthetic benefits for present and future generations of the citizens of this state. In furtherance of this policy, the State Fish and Wildlife Commission shall represent the public interest of the State of Oregon..."

The commission is not meant to be a board of experts on regional ecology or policy. It is meant to be a voice for the people in providing oversight to agency actions and providing regulatory decision-making within the confines of state law. It's the agency that provides regional expertise. ODFW staff have a presence all across Oregon, conduct monitoring all over the state, and hold meetings everywhere in the state.

The congressional district model was instituted to ensure the public interest would, in fact, be proportionally represented. Maintaining this existing structure will not only allow for the broadest candidate pool proportionate to population, but also that the commission reflects the changing demographics of the state.

We urge you to oppose HB 3086 and instead, move forward with the -1 or -3 amendment.