

# Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

February 6, 2024

Chair Helm, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

RE: HB 4148

The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP) is a national Conservation organization representing a broad coalition, including 63 organizational partners and over 140,000 members nationwide. Our mission focuses on advancing policies and partnerships that conserve and restore fish and wildlife habitats, advocate for conservation funding, and enhance recreational access.

The TRCP extends its full support to House Bill 4148, recognizing its comprehensive approach to addressing critical wildlife conservation issues within Oregon. This legislation encompasses vital areas such as the management of wildlife diseases, control of invasive species, strategies for wildlife coexistence, and the enhancement of wildlife corridors and crossings. Our endorsement is based on the conviction that the bill's successful enactment will close the loop on past successful legislation and significantly benefit Oregon's ecosystems, wildlife populations, and the vast recreational opportunities they support.

**Zoonotic Disease Management:** The expansion of wildlife disease programs, as outlined, is critical in the face of increasing threats from zoonotic diseases Like Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), Highly-Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and others. Strengthening the partnership between the State Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon State University, and the Oregon Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory will enhance our state's capacity to monitor, prevent, and respond to diseases that could impact both wildlife and human health. This proactive approach in zoonotic disease management is essential for safeguarding public health and ensuring the resilience of our wildlife populations.


**Invasive Species Control:** The bill's focus on invasive species management, through the review and enhancement of the Invasive Species Council's programs, is another cornerstone of our support. Invasive species pose significant threats to Oregon's native ecosystems, disrupting habitats, competing with native species and impacting ecosystem productivity at a landscape level. By prioritizing actions to prevent the establishment and spread of invasive species, 4148 lays the groundwork for preserving biodiversity and maintaining ecological balance.


**Highlighted Support for Wildlife Corridors:** Special emphasis is placed on Section 6, concerning wildlife corridors, which is pivotal for ensuring the safety and connectivity of our state's wildlife habitats. The development of these corridors is integral to reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions and maintaining the ecological integrity of our landscapes. The bill's directives for data collection, funding acquisition, and interagency collaboration exemplify a comprehensive strategy for wildlife conservation and habitat connectivity.

The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership proudly supports 4148 and applauds the full suite of actions this bill provides. By addressing zoonotic diseases, invasive species, wildlife coexistence, and corridor enhancement, the bill sets a precedent for sustainable conservation practices that will benefit Oregon's natural resources and the communities that value them so deeply.

*Thank you,*

**Tristan Henry** | Oregon Field Representative, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

 [www.trcp.org](http://www.trcp.org)

 [thenry@trcp.org](mailto:thenry@trcp.org)