

Submitter: John Livingston  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and  
Wildfire  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB427

Dear Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash, and Members of the Committee,

I support Senate Bill 427 to safeguard and provide a mechanism to protect stream flows in water right transfers. The water in our streams is our state's lifeblood for humans and the entire ecosystem. It grows our salmon and our food, and it fuels our families. It ties us to our neighbors upstream and downstream. It belongs to all of us.

Yet for far too long, an outdated loophole has allowed the Oregon Water Resources Department to approve applications for water right transfers without adequate consideration of whether the change will harm stream flows. Lower water levels in a stream do hurt fish, impair water quality, and decrease scenic and recreation values. Using scientific streamflow measurements will help ensure the water right transfers will not have a negative impact.

Senate Bill 427 safeguards our streams—and the fish, water quality, and scenic values they support—by ensuring voluntary water right changes won't further diminish streamflows. This narrow fix closes a dangerous loophole and brings modern environmental values into Oregon's outdated water right transfer review process.

I urge your support of SB 427 and the life-sustaining stream flows it will safeguard.

Sincerely,