

Submitter: Michelle E Rice
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB427

I support Senate Bill 427 to safeguard streamflows in water right transfers.

The water in our streams is Oregon state's lifeblood. It grows our salmon and our food. It belongs to all of us.

An outdated loophole has allowed the Oregon Water Resources Department to approve applications for water right transfers without adequate consideration of whether the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 can hurt fish, impair water quality, and decrease scenic and recreation values.

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 stream flows. This narrow fix closes a dangerous loophole and brings modern environmental values into Oregon's outdated water right transfer review process.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.