



American Fisheries Society Oregon Chapter

OR Chapter AFS: PO Box 8062 Portland, OR 97207-8062 www.orafs.org

Date: June 26, 2025

RE: OREGON CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY SUPPORT FOR DEDICATING INCREASED STATE TRANSIENT LODGING TAX TO SUPPORT THE RECOVERING OREGON'S WILDLIFE FUND BILL (HB 2977)

Chief Sponsors Rep. Helm, Sen. Gorsek, Rep. Owens, Sen. Frederick, Sen. Nash:

The Oregon Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (ORAFS) comprises approximately 300 fisheries and aquatics science professionals from federal, state, and tribal agencies, colleges and universities, diverse private employers, college students, and retirees. ORAFS was established in 1964 as a chapter of the American Fisheries Society. Our mission is to improve the conservation and sustainability of Oregon fishery resources and their aquatic ecosystems for long-term public benefit by advancing science, education and public discourse concerning fisheries and aquatic science and by promoting the development of fisheries professionals.

ORAFS members support the bi-partisan bill recently passed by the Oregon House of Representatives (HB 2977), which dedicates a portion of the State transient lodging tax to the conservation of Oregon's fish and wildlife. This bill will provide sustained funding and investment to provide much needed support for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to accomplish their mission of protecting and enhancing Oregon's fish and wildlife and their habitats for use and enjoyment by present and future generations.

The state has many aquatic species which are not charismatic and do not bring in direct funding from hunting or fishing licenses. These species are important to the overall health of Oregon's aquatic ecosystems, which in turn support rural, commercial, and recreational economies throughout the state.

ORAFS members support the specific provisions of HB 2977 which invest in Oregon's Wildlife Action Plan, address conflicting human-wildlife interactions, and assist anti-poaching programs.

This legislation will address many of the management challenges that have come from increasing use of public lands from recreational and other tourism related pressures. Residents and out-of-state visitors to Oregon enjoy and recreate in diverse areas of Oregon and the increased lodging tax is an acceptable solution to maintain and protect Oregon's highly valuable and diverse wildlife, including aquatic species. Investing sooner rather than later is prudent given population growth and challenges such as climate changes, including wildfires, drought, and flooding.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our support of Oregon's Wildlife Action Plan and other items that will directly influence Oregon's fisheries. We fully support HB 2977 and encourage Senate approval of the provisions in the bill.

Respectfully,

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