

Submitter: Duncan Kerst  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Revenue  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134  
Chair Nathanson and Members of the House Committee on Revenue,

My name is Duncan Kerst and I live in Portland Oregon. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 4134 with the -1 amendment to increase the state lodging tax by 1.25% and help recover Oregon's most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats.

As a life-time member of Trout Unlimited, I support improvement of fish Habitat, support of Wild salmon and Wild steelhead runs, removal of fish hatcheries, removal of the Winchester Dam on the North Umpqua and other dams that block fish runs, restoration of the Lower Deschutes River water quality, Water temperature monitoring, catch / release fish restrictions to limit fish harvest. I realize this is a wish list. However, this bill will provide some financial help to enforce existing regulations and support the Fish First!

Oregon is an incredibly special place, and our state's identity is closely tied to its rich natural heritage, including native fish, wildlife, and the habitats that support them. Oregonians' love for the outdoors is known throughout this country and beyond. Oregonians like me are proud of our natural heritage and want to see it thrive for future generations.

Securing long-term dedicated funding to recover our most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats is strongly supported by a majority of Oregonians. I urge you to support this landmark bill, which would dedicate long-term funding to recover Oregon's most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats — all of which are critical for our state's tourism economy. Oregon's robust outdoor tourism economy — accounting for 2.6% of the state's GDP — supports 192,000 jobs and brings in \$16 billion in consumer spending. Investing in these resources now will continue to generate more economic opportunities for Oregon's communities in the future.

We cannot have a thriving tourism economy without healthy and abundant fish, wildlife, and the habitats that support them. This legislation would ensure we have both. At a time when the federal government is slashing funds and dismantling policies that protect our vulnerable fish and wildlife and their habitats, Oregon has a chance to set an example and protect our natural heritage. Doing so would make Oregon a national leader.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to protect our natural legacy and rich biodiversity, which make this state so special. Please pass HB 4134 -1 this legislative session!

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Duncan Kerst