

Submitter: Rick Osborn
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1584
Re: Support for SB 1584

Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash and members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire:

My name is Rick Osborn and I live in Coos Bay. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on SB 1584. This bill provides a huge opportunity to implement a program that will create a groundswell of salmon habitat development in Oregon, without relying on taxpayer dollars. I worked in the Capitol for a time, and I also grew up in Coos County and lived most of my life around rural Oregon. I know farmers, ranchers, loggers, fishers, watershed council members and others who make their living off the land. They also revere it and the fish and wildlife that we are blessed to be able to enjoy here. This is a great way to get many of them, as landowners, more involved in solving the salmon shortages around our state.

SB 1584 will rely on private dollars to monetize rearing wild salmon for ranchers and farmers, and it will make these amazing fish part of their book value. This way our Ag community can truly say they grow cattle, hay, and salmon.

Developers often have salmon mitigation obligations when they're building on the coast, and to fulfill this obligation they may hire a land-use consultant, biologist, geomorphologist, purchase the land, design and build the mitigation, and place the mitigated land in a conservation easement. With the salmon credit they could purchase the necessary salmon credits for double the cost of the mitigation (with half paying for the required mitigation and the other half going into a permanent salmon trust fund to pay an annual dividend to the landowner for growing wild salmon on newly created habitat). Once they purchase the required salmon credits, developers would be done with the mitigation portion of their project, saving them years of process in the system.

For landowners, the salmon credit represents a reliable income stream for their marginal lands (which make the best salmon habitat). It will open lands to salmon restoration we would not otherwise have access to, because under SB 1584, rearing wild fish will fiscally support family farming operations. Landowners would be happily willing to cooperate in exchange for the additional annual income provided from wild salmonid rearing.

SB 1584 is a winner for ranchers and rural landowners. Please join me in supporting this bill.

Sincerely,
Rick Osborn
Blue Ridge Strategies