

Submitter: Reed Wilson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

As a red tree vole surveyor with 20 years experience I am familiar with the habitat needs of forest dwelling species. Red tree voles eat conifer needles, live in the canopy, and utilize cavities, defects, epicormic branching and wide limbs to support nests, somewhat similar to the requirements of marbled murrelets. Red tree voles share habitat with northern flying squirrels, woodpeckers, and other cavity nesters, and are an essential food source for owls and raptors.

Red tree vole populations are threatened by habitat loss from commercial logging and development. The average size of a block of red tree vole habitat in western Oregon is just two percent of what it was one hundred years ago, and red tree voles persist only in small isolated blocks of old growth and mature forest.

Oregon's multibillion dollar tourist and outdoor recreation industries support thousands of jobs and contribute thousands of dollars to local and state taxes. The presence of viewable wildlife attracts out of state tourists and is a major economic driver for Oregon's economy. At the same time, wildlife habitat in Oregon is constantly shrinking, threatened by development, logging, and associated roadbuilding. Any monetary contribution we can make to support and preserve wildlife populations will repay Oregonians in the future, by attracting out of state tourists, and enhancing our own experience of living in this wonderful state.