

Submitter: David Herasimtschuk

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

My name is David Herasimtschuk, and I am conservation photographer and filmmaker based in Oregon. I am writing in strong support of HB 4134, which would establish a dedicated and reliable funding source for wildlife, fish, and habitat conservation in our state.

Oregon is home to an extraordinary diversity of fish and wildlife, yet a striking number of these species are currently classified as species of conservation concern. From native salmon and amphibians to birds, mammals, and freshwater species, many are experiencing long-term declines driven by habitat loss, climate change, invasive species, and increasing pressures from human activities. Despite the scale of this challenge, there is simply not enough funding available to meaningfully protect and recover the majority of these species. This funding gap has real consequences. Without proactive investment, species declines accelerate, ecosystems become less resilient, and the costs, ecological, economic, and social, grow substantially over time.

Importantly, many of the species now at risk are foundational to the ecosystems that support human communities across Oregon. Healthy wildlife populations help maintain clean water, stable soils, productive fisheries, flood mitigation, and resilient forests and rivers. When these systems function well, they directly support agriculture, drinking water supplies, outdoor recreation, tourism, and public safety. Investing in wildlife conservation is not separate from investing in people, it is a critical part of sustaining Oregon communities.

HB 4134 represents a proactive, responsible approach to addressing this need. By creating a dedicated source of funding for wildlife and habitat conservation, Oregon can act earlier, before species require emergency intervention or federal listing, and ensure that conservation efforts are science-based, coordinated, and effective. This bill helps shift our approach from reactive crisis management to long-term stewardship.

As a wildlife biologist and photographer, I have seen these challenges and opportunities firsthand. I have documented both the quiet erosion of ecosystems under strain and the measurable improvements that occur when adequate resources are directed toward habitat restoration, species recovery, and monitoring. Where funding exists, conservation works. Where it does not, declines continue largely unchecked.

Supporting HB 4134 is an investment in Oregon's ecological resilience, its rural and

urban communities, and the natural systems that underpin our economy and quality of life. I urge you to support this bill and help ensure that Oregon has the tools necessary to protect its wildlife heritage—for current residents and for generations to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration.