

To: Oregon House Committee on Revenue
Subject: In support of House Bill 4134



Feb. 4, 2026

Dear Chair and members of the committee,

Rogue Riverkeeper is a program of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center (KS Wild) based in Ashland, Oregon and advocates for the wildlands, biodiversity, and clean water of southwest Oregon and northwest California. We represent approximately 4,000 members and supporters across Oregon and beyond.

We write in strong support of HB 4134. Oregon is fortunate to have a rich diversity of rivers, wetlands, estuaries, and aquatic species that sustain both ecological health and community well-being. The waters, natural landscapes, ecosystems, and biodiversity are a benefit and valued by both residents and visitors. Oregon's waters form the backbone of its outdoor recreation economy, drawing millions of visitors each year to fish, boat, swim, and connect with our rivers and streams. In 2023, Oregon's outdoor recreation industry accounted for 2.6% of the state's GDP—above the national average—and generated \$16 billion in consumer spending while supporting 192,000 jobs. Healthy aquatic habitats are fundamental to this success, particularly in river-dependent regions like the Rogue Basin.

However, Oregon's aquatic ecosystems and the species that depend on them face mounting threats from climate change, invasive species, altered flows, wildfire impacts, and habitat degradation. The Oregon Conservation Strategy—now the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP)—identifies at least 321 species of greatest conservation need and 11 native habitat types requiring proactive restoration, many of which are aquatic or riparian. Without sustained, targeted investment, these species and habitats will continue to decline, jeopardizing water quality, fisheries, recreation opportunities, and the resilience of communities that depend on healthy rivers and streams.

HB 4134 offers a proactive and timely solution by securing consistent funding to address these urgent challenges. The bill will support critical work in habitat restoration, invasive species control, wildlife connectivity, and wildfire risk reduction—actions that deliver significant co-benefits for aquatic ecosystems and human communities. For river systems like the Rogue, this funding can help restore floodplains, improve fish passage, protect cold-water refuges, and strengthen watershed resilience in the face of increasing drought and fire. These investments are essential to sustaining native fish populations, including salmon and steelhead, that are integral to Oregon's ecological and cultural heritage.

At a time when federal capacity to support on-the-ground conservation has been reduced, HB 4134 allows Oregon to step up and meet its responsibility to protect its most vulnerable lands and waters. By dedicating a modest increase in the state transient lodging tax to conservation, this bill provides a stable and sustainable funding source for ODFW to recover imperiled species, enhance biodiversity, and safeguard aquatic habitats—while meeting Oregonians' clear expectation that protecting biodiversity should be a priority. This increase to Oregon's state transient lodging tax would provide a steady, sustainable source of funds to agencies and partners to recover Oregon's most imperiled species and habitat and enhance biodiversity – all while making Oregon a more attractive place for residents and visitors alike. Rogue Riverkeeper urges your support for HB 4134 to ensure Oregon's rivers, wildlife, and communities can thrive for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Frances Oyung
Program Manager
Rogue Riverkeeper