

Deschutes Land Trust

210 NW IRVING AVENUE, SUITE 102
BEND, OREGON 97703
OFFICE: (541) 330-0017
DESCHUTESLANDTRUST.ORG



CONSERVATION. COMMUNITY. CARING FOR THE LAND.

February 26, 2026

To: Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue

From: Deschutes Land Trust

RE: Support for HB 4134

Chair Broadman, Vice-Chair McLane and Members of the Committee:

The Deschutes Land Trust would like to express our strong support of HB 4134 to increase the state lodging tax by 1.25%. This landmark bill will provide the reliable funding needed to help protect and recover Oregon's incredible diversity of native plants, fish and wildlife. Deschutes Land Trust works to conserve and care for the lands and waters that sustain Central Oregon so that local communities and the natural world can flourish together for generations to come. We understand the value of Oregon's unique natural heritage to its citizens' quality of life and to its economy and want to do all we can to see it thrive for future generations.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) identified nearly 300 species at elevated risk of extinction and 11 habitats in great need of conservation. ODFW's current budget primarily provides funding for big game species, sport fish and species protected under the Endangered Species Act. It does not currently provide funding to adequately carry out the SWAP. HB 4134 will provide crucial funding for the SWAP to protect and recover some of Oregon's most vulnerable and imperiled species and habitats, along with other conservation programs such as habitat connectivity, wildlife rehabilitation facilities, and anti-poaching efforts, complementing the conservation work of Deschutes Land Trust.

HB 4134 will also help protect Oregon's tourism economy, which relies on healthy and abundant fish and wildlife and the habitats that support them. Oregon's robust outdoor tourism economy - 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.

At a time when the federal government is slashing funds and dismantling policies that protect our vulnerable natural resources, Oregon has a chance to set an example and protect our natural legacy and rich biodiversity, which make this state so special. The nation is watching. Now is the time to show Oregon's leadership. Please pass HB 4134 this legislative session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Natasha Bellis".

Natasha Bellis
Conservation Director