

I am writing to express my full support for HB 4134. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) has identified over 300 species facing extinction in Oregon. Eleven key habitat areas are at risk. ODFW has a plan to recover these species (<https://oregonconservationstrategy.org/>), however ODFW does not have the dedicated funding to implement this plan and programs to recover wildlife species and habitat have been severely underfunded. This must change now.

HB 4134 is endorsed by entities across Oregon, including businesses, rural and urban residents, and voters of all parties or no party, because it is common sense and serves the people of Oregon. Just a 1.25% increase on the transient lodging tax would make a significant difference in protecting our wildlife and their habitats. Benefits to wildlife will bring benefits to people, businesses, and communities of Oregon. Realize that this tax will mostly be paid by visitors to this state and none will be paid by businesses. Visitors come to Oregon to experience wildlife, much of which is rapidly disappearing, and many will be proud and grateful to know they are helping to save what they value.

Passage of HB 4134 will result in:

1. reduction in wildlife-vehicle collisions,
2. improved invasive species control,
3. provision of a dedicated funding source to the ODFW so they will no longer need to rely on voluntary donations to wildlife rehabilitation centers
4. additional anti-poaching law enforcement (an increasing problem),
5. more outdoor education,
6. expanded habitat restoration,
7. increased beaver habitat (hence, less spread of wildfire),
8. added wolf-predation compensation for ranchers