

Submitter: Kriss Wright
On Behalf Of: Friends of Kriss Wright
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

Dear Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue,

"The 1.25% "For Wildlife" bill (HB 4134) proceeds will directly support farmers through habitat restoration grants (riparian buffers, fencing), invasive species control, wolf depredation compensation, and technical assistance. Yamhill & Polk County producers could access these programs through ODFW and partner conservation groups.

HB 4234 would raise Oregon's transient lodging tax to fund habitat recovery, wildlife coexistence, and stewardship programs. Stewardship programs collaborate with Farms helping habitat recovery by restoring and managing land in ways that increase native vegetation, improve water quality, and create corridors and refuges for wildlife. Practices like riparian buffers, cover crops, native grassland restoration, and targeted easements both boost biodiversity and often improve farm resilience and productivity in places like Yamhill County.,

How the bill channels money to help farmers

Dedicated funding for State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP): supports habitat projects that often overlap with working lands (riparian restoration, wetland enhancement) and can include cost-share for on-farm conservation.

Wolf depredation compensation and financial assistance:

Creates a more reliable pool to reimburse livestock losses and fund nonlethal deterrents (fladry, guardian animals, fencing). This reduces economic risk for ranchers.

Wildlife Stewardship and Connectivity programs:

Fund projects that reduce human-wildlife conflict (wildlife crossings, habitat corridors) and can pay landowners for easements or stewardship actions on private lands.

Invasive species response and habitat recovery grants:

Help farmers control weeds that harm forage and water quality and restore native vegetation that supports pollinators and fisheries.

How this Benefits Farmers

How HB3134 helps farmers, Example program &
Likely funding source

Depredation compensation

Reimburses livestock losses, funds deterrents

Example program: Wolf Depredation Compensation Program,

Likely funding source: HB 4134 lodging tax revenue.

Riparian restoration

Improves water quality; stabilizes banks; enhances forage.

Example program: SWAP habitat grants; stewardship payments,

Likely funding source: SWAP/Conservation grants from HB 4134.

Fencing & Deterrents

Reduces predation risk; protects crops.

Example program: Financial assistance grants,

Likely funding source: Wildlife Stewardship/ODFW funds.

Invasive species control

Protects pasture productivity; reduces management costs.

Example program: Invasive species response grants,

Likely funding source: HB 4134 invasive species allocation.

Practical steps for Oregon Farmers

1. Monitor ODFW and local conservation districts for grant solicitations and application windows; HB 4134 funds would flow through ODFW and partner NGOs.

2. Document losses and conservation actions now (photos, vet/livestock records, GPS of projects) to speed compensation and grant eligibility.

3. Partner with land trusts or watershed councils to design riparian or connectivity projects that qualify for stewardship payments.

4. Explore cost-share for nonlethal deterrents and technical assistance to reduce future losses and strengthen grant applications.

Risks, trade-offs, and what to watch:

Timing and Rules: Funds depend on legislative passage and program rulemaking; expect application criteria and timelines to be set after enactment.

Competition for funds: Projects tied to public benefits (habitat, recreation) may be prioritized; farmers should emphasize ecosystem services and community benefits in proposals.

Administrative capacity: Smaller operations may need help with applications—partnering with conservation groups reduces this barrier.

Exemption for protecting small, independent lodging providers

- Size or revenue threshold exemption — exempt properties <50 thousand

Please vote in favor of HB4134