Oregon Council Trout Unlimited

Feb. 9, 2012

Chair Bailey and Chair Gilliam, Committee members-

My name is Tom Wolf, representing Trout Unlimited, the largest coldwater conservation group in the country, and I am here today to give TU's support for HB 4060 and the -1 amendments.

One of the biggest concerns among fishery biologists and the conservation community today is the development of genetically altered fish, which is called by some "Frankenfish" ,and their impact on wild native fish if they escape into streams and rivers. They can have an enormous negative impact on the native population in introducing genetic impurities into gene pool. This can cause a weakening of behavior of wild salmon and have long term effects which could cause wild populations of native salmon to crash. The risk of interaction between genetically altered fish and our native salmon and trout is just too great. Added to all the other potential impacts on our wild salmonids, HB 4060 is a concept which should be supported.

Trout Unlimited also supports the language in HB 4060 concerning the possibility of farm Atlantic salmon introducing infectious salmon anemia to wild native fish such as Chinook salmon or many of our other native salmon or trout species. This bill will help prevent the possibility of the spread of this extremely harmful disease by not allowing Atlantic salmon stocks such as this to come into Oregon waters.

Trout Unlimited feels that HB 4060 is an important bill which deserves to be heard and have a work session on. If this cannot be done in 2012 session due to time constraints, then it needs to be further discussed during the 2013 session. Genetically altered fish and the impact they have on wild native salmon and trout species is a very important issue and one which our state needs to discuss and act on soon.

Sincerely,

Tom Wolf

Tom Wolf, chair
Oregon Council Trout Unlimited