



TU Celebrates 50 Years of Protecting Cold, Clean, Fishable Water.

Oregon Council Trout Unlimited

Chair Witt and Committee members-

I am Tom Wolf, Chair/Executive Director of the Oregon Council Trout Unlimited, a coldwater conservation organization. First a little bit about myself. I am a 6th generation Oregonian who, as my father, a high school football/coach, moved from town to town, have lived all over the state in towns such as Wallowa, Pilot Rock, Seaside, Astoria, etc. I grew up all over this wonderful state. As a descendent of farmers and loggers, and with family members who actively farm, I know how important rural areas and use of our natural resources. One of my 3 heros, my grandfather Casey, was a logger for over 50 years, starting at the age of 12. In fact the reason I am here down in Salem is due to a promise I made to him to protect the forest and bring back the wild salmon. As the person who took me to fish and hunt and was my best friend as a teenager, honoring that promise drives me in the work I do for a healthy environment and wild native fish.

The 3000 members of Trout Unlimited in Oregon, who are liberals and conservatives, Democrats and Republicans, are involved in doing advocacy, education and restoration planting trees, removing invasive vegetation and providing fish passage on the North Oregon coast, upper Deschutes basin, upper Willamette, Clackamas and other watersheds across our state. They do this because they are fisherman who love healthy watersheds and the wild trout or salmon which live there. They have devoted thousands of hours to restoration, educating youth and restoring habitat. One of those volunteers has just been picked by the magazine "Field and Stream" as their Conservation hero and will appear in the April addition. He is an example of the type of dedicated volunteers Trout Unlimited has.

1. We believe that by providing healthy watersheds and intact native wild fish populations, we protect very important values for future generations of Oregonians. TU's goal is to recover wild populations to fishable levels on many rivers and streams.
2. Fishing, hunting and wildlife viewing provide \$2.5 billion dollars into Oregon's economy annually, per a Dean Runyan study commissioned by ODFW. Restoring wild salmon and trout levels to harvestable levels makes us less dependent on costly hatchery operations which use runways and equipment which is expensive to use, requires constant maintenance and eventually will have to be replaced. Finally, it is always more expensive to restore rather than protect.

As for bills and issues Trout Unlimited will be working on this session, we will be working on bills which will protect and restore salmon habitat which can cover a wide range of issues such as healthy forests, water quality, sufficient instream flows, fish genetics, hatchery reform, and protection of stream riparian areas.

Specific bills I would like to briefly mention that TU will be targeting this session are HB 2396-Management of Large Woody Debris in rivers and streams, HB 2530-dealing with genetically altered fish SB 217 water management fee and SB 115-dealing with suction dredge mining in streams. These are just a few examples of the many bills we will be moving to pass this session.