



## TUALATIN RIVERKEEPERS.

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Feb. 16, 2015

Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
Re: Opposition to SB 201 Natural Resources Alignment Coordinators

Chair Edwards and Committee Members:

Tualatin Riverkeepers is a community based organization working to protect and restore the Tualatin River watershed located in Washington and parts of Clackamas and Multnomah counties. The Tualatin River supports the industrial and agricultural base of Washington County and provides important habitat and recreational resources for a growing community.

Tualatin Riverkeepers opposes SB 201 with the following concerns:

- The bill lacks definition – It is not clear how state agencies need to improve the ‘manner’ in which they make decisions? How will the ‘alignment coordinators’ assist state agencies and what assistance is needed?
- We are concerned that the ‘natural resource alignment’ coordinators and regional solutions teams whose mission is economic development will apply pressure, wittingly or not, on natural resource agencies in order to facilitate development.
- The natural resource state agencies have an over riding mission to protect natural resources that is their public trust charge. This mission should not be conflicted or diluted in order to facilitate private development.

If there is a problem with the issuance of permits, we suggest a more useful approach would be to examine whether or not there may be more value in simply augmenting the natural resources state agency staff involved in permit issuance.

Without clearly defining what the problem is that SB 201 hopes to remedy, Tualatin Riverkeepers opposes the bill as it is not worth the risk of undermining the impartiality of the regulatory process and mission of the natural resource agencies.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

Brian Wegener, Riverkeeper