

February 11, 2019

Co-Chairs Reardon and Taylor and Members of the Joint Committee
on Ways And Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources
Environment and Natural Resources, Chair
900 Court St. NE, S-407



RE: Support for Sage Grouse Funding in HB 5027

Dear Co-Chairs Reardon and Taylor and Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Natural Resources

On behalf the Audubon Society of Portland representing over 15,000 members we are writing in support of the \$500,000 allocated in the Department of Land Conservation and Development budget to fund Oregon's share of costs for Oregon Consensus and Oregon Solutions programs' support of collaborative efforts to protect and conserve Greater Sage Grouse through the SageCon Partnership. Audubon has been participating in the SageCon Partnership since its inception in 2010. The collaborative conservation efforts developed through SageCon played an essential role in preventing the need to list the Greater Sage Grouse under the Federal Endangered Species Act in 215. Continuing to fund SageCon is essential to ensure that sage grouse recovery efforts are implemented and adaptively managed in Oregon to prevent the need to list this species in the future.

Oregon and its federal partners share the costs of supporting the SageCon Partnership, a national model for successful collaboration. Funding includes coordination, technical support, and facilitation for SageCon Coordinating Council, Staff Implementation Team, All-County SWCD CCAA Coordinating Committee. Effective coordination among SageCon's large and diverse set of stakeholders allows partners to align their efforts for maximum efficiency and effectiveness. It is worth noting that the BLM and NRCS have investing more than \$50 million in this partnership since 2015, The state investment of \$250/ year plays a critical role in leveraging more than \$15 million per year in federal investment.

We strongly urge you to retain \$500,000 in funding for SageCon in the DLCD Budget (HB 5027)

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Sallinger". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bob Sallinger, Conservation Director
Audubon Society of Portland
5151 NW Cornell Road
Portland, OR 97210