

March 12, 2019

**House Committee on Natural Resources:**

Chair, Representative Brad Witt  
Vice-Chair, Representative Chris Gorsek  
Vice-Chair, Representative Sherrie Sprenger  
Member, Representative Greg Barreto  
Member, Representative Caddy McKeown  
Member, Representative Jeff Reardon  
Member, Representative David Brock Smith

**RE: HB 2829 re Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund (OCRF) – Testimony  
for the Public Record**

Dear Chair Witt, Vice-Chairs Gorsek and Sprenger, and Members of the Committee:

We urge you to support House Bill 2829, which establishes the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund and appropriates General Fund money to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). Unfortunately, reduced funding to protect Oregon's native fish and wildlife populations has compromised important research, habitat improvement, enforcement and conservation efforts. Fishing and hunting license fees and federal excise taxes, on which these programs currently rely, are unreliable, unsustainable, and inequitable funding sources. Dedicated General Fund revenue would be far more suitable to support the management of natural resources for all Oregonians, present and future.

HB 2829 is also cost-effective. It will increase the buying power of Oregonian's taxpayer dollars by providing funds that can be used as the state match needed to leverage federal funding sources. Further, investing proactively in maintaining healthy native fish and wildlife populations costs less than managing populations once they are threatened or endangered. And this bill will support a more than \$16 billion outdoor recreation economy in Oregon. Clearly, not approving HB 2829 would be penny-wise but pound-foolish.

In 2015, Governor Brown established a task force to look at sustainable funding options for fish and wildlife management efforts. To date, no action has been taken to address the task force's recommendations. HB 2829 would be a good start.

Oregon is already playing catch-up in terms of fish and wildlife management, so the time to act is now. Thank you for considering our comments and please support HB 2829.

Sincerely, 

Roberta Jortner and Karl Lee  
7201 SE 36<sup>th</sup> Ave. Portland, OR 97202

cc: Kailey Kornhauser, Analyst for the House Committee on Natural Resources  
Oregon House Representative Karin Power