



Oregon Mountain Biking Coalition

March 13, 2019

House Committee On Natural Resources
Chair Representative Witt, Co-Vice Chairs Representative Gorsek, Representative Sprenger,
Members of the Committee. 900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: SUPPORT FOR HB 2829

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

On behalf of the Oregon Mountain Biking Coalition, I write today in support of HB 2829. The Oregon Mountain Biking Coalition (www.ormtbcoalition.org) is a recently-established and rapidly growing coalition of twenty trail stewardship and advocacy organizations, committed to the preservation of Oregon's outdoor assets for future generations.

Our coalition has established legislative priorities that members have determined fit with our goals of being exemplary steward of our State's public land. These priorities include, but are not limited to: outdoor recreation access, recreation infrastructure, economic vitality, and support for responsible recreation. The establishment of the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund speaks to several of these priorities by:

- Funding activities that protect, maintain or enhance the state's native fish and wildlife, such as wildlife conservation, management, research, habitat improvements, and enforcement activities.
- Implementing the Oregon Conservation Strategy and Nearshore Strategy.
- Expanding opportunities for sustainable, responsible outdoor recreation activities to and in support of healthy fish, wildlife and habitats.
- Increasing education and outreach to diverse and underserved communities.
- Reducing Oregon's reliance on fishing and hunting fees to protect and enhance Oregon's fish, wildlife and their habitats.

The Oregon legislature has the opportunity to reaffirm the importance outdoor recreation has to its residents and visitors by advancing HB 2829. According to the Outdoor Industry Association, outdoor recreation produces \$16.4 billion in consumer spending in Oregon each year and supports 172,000 jobs. In addition, a recent OSU study found that outdoor recreation results in as much as \$1.4 billion in avoided health care costs each year. The legislature's inclusion of a \$13 million appropriation to the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund demonstrates the continued support of this significant sector of Oregon's economy and its importance in Oregonian's lives.

This appropriation is also important as a match for leveraged investments from funds such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund, as well as other public and private sources.

The Oregon Mountain Biking Coalition is excited to see a pathway to achieving a balance between recreation and conservation outcomes and an opportunity to create meaningful alliances amongst diverse organizations and agencies in the state of Oregon.

We thank you for the opportunity to write testimony about this important issue and for your time.

Respectfully,

Matthew Weintraub
OMBC Steering Committee