

From: [Sam Work](#)
To: [Exhibits HNR](#)
Subject: Support for HB 2835
Date: Friday, March 15, 2019 7:50:48 PM

House Committee On Natural Resources
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: SUPPORT FOR HB 2835

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

As a whitewater paddler who has been working on Oregon's rivers as small business owner for the past 19 years, I ask for your support to protect access to our state's incredible and unique waterways through the passage of House Bill 2835, as it is amended. We have unfortunately missed several important opportunities for enhanced access to our whitewater rivers with ODOT/ODFW projects in the past which could have helped my business and our industry had a better system been in place. Several of these projects have had the opposite result, and made access more difficult and restricted opportunities for enhanced public access.

This legislation (as it is to be amended) will preserve and enhance public access to waterways by:

- Creating a required public process where state land and waterway agencies would be required to engage in a public review process for any public waterway access closures greater than 30 days in length. The legislation allows for exceptions for emergencies such as wildfire and for critical wildlife and ecological management activities, as well as for short-term construction and/or site improvement related closures.
- Requiring that state agencies work in cooperation to produce a report each year that is available to the public, reporting the number of waterway access sites that have been closed to access by state agencies in the previous calendar year and the reasons for each closure; as well as providing the number of public access sites for recreational use of public waterways that have been opened by state agencies in the previous calendar year.
- Finally, the legislation seeks to enhance public access to public waterways by incorporating a feasibility assessment for waterway access integration into new state bridge construction or reconstruction projects. This would not require the retroactive review of existing state bridges, nor require a state agency to fund the construction of access to a waterway, and would encourage interagency coordination on access projects where access improvements are suitable.

Preservation of access to public waterways and public lands is a critical backbone of the growing outdoor recreation economy, and a love for rivers is a value that is deeply embedded in the history and identity of our state. Rivers offer unique opportunities for residents and visitors alike to boat, hike, fish, enjoy wildlife, and treasure our states incredible natural resources.

For the reasons stated above, I ask that you please support the amended HB 2835.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to submit testimony,

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Sam Drevo
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