From:	Thomas O'Neill <habitat@thehabitatinstitute.org>
Sent:	Tuesday, May 14, 2019 9:56 AM
To:	SENR Exhibits
Cc:	Sen Prozanski; Rep Helm; Rep Marsh; Sen Dembrow; Rep Gorsek; Rep Holvey; Rep KenyGuyer; Rep Neron; Rep Smith D; Rep Zika
Subject:	HB 2834: Wildlife Corridor Action Plan Needs to Broaden Vision Not Just Looking at Why the Chicken Crossed the Road

Dear Senators and Representatives: The Habitat Institute offers the following comments about HB 2834: Wildlife Corridor Action Plan. First what has changed since this bill was crafted? Answer: The release of a major report that looks at the value of Nature whereby human activity is driving our biodiversity to a crisis that looms as large as the climate change. This assessment of our biodiversity and the ecological systems we rely on is in dire straits, just look at the fire rates, change in climate events, the disappearance of species that we thought were common now are a rarity to see. I would urge this committee not to just pass a Plan of Action but to take the bold step to move in the direction to Value Nature. Nature needs to be valued and considered in every venue as a system. If you want to address the simple cause and effect, animals killed by vehicles, have ODOT and ODFW collaborate on an APP that identifies these areas and then get it to Google Maps, Waze, auto manufactures, etc. to help remediate wildlife-vehicle collisions and while there at it do a similar APP for planes and boats.

Connectivity is important issue on roadways that bisect our landscape, but depending on the biodiversity of interest it could be measured in feet, yards, or miles. We have had the ability today to value habitat and the biodiversity that resides with it. ODOT has been aware of this since 2005, ODFW used an approach in 2010 to reach a $150 million dollar wildlife settlement with Bonneville Power Administration, and OWEB is pushing forward (as recently as two months ago) with their program that incorporates goals and objectives from 2004 that nobody acknowledges or embraces. So as our legislature leaders, please take the time to read the information at the below link and then lead the way for the future. The approach to embark on is to setup a system that can address all species, habitats and functions throughout the State. The assessments need to look at individual species but also 100s of species concurrently. You can lay the ground work to Value Nature in ecosystem restoration, flood risk management, impacts and mitigation, natural resource damage assessment as well as be used in conservation strategies. The public would benefit from this by starting an Advance Mitigation Program associated with this bill. Whereby ODOT would pay for mitigation in advance of impacts using a metric that values habitat and its biodiversity (species and functions). You need a program and metric that is dynamic because the connectivity for today may not be the connectivity for tomorrow. The metric needs to be based on science not policy and needs to meet the best available science standard and work in all habitats across the state. This is doable today!!

Please revise this bill to set the framework for advance mitigation that will embrace our biodiversity values and have the State of Oregon lead the way. We do not need another Plan of Action that sets on the shelf, and quite frankly I am surprise that agencies need a bill to collaborate on connectivity given they have already had a past effort to address connectivity in the state. If there is some mechanism in this bill that requires this consideration among state agencies, then that is a good thing, but it needs to be backed up with funding. And, this leads me back to using this bill as a framework to establish an Advance Mitigation Program.

If you have any questions about what we are suggesting, please let me know.

Best,

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- **'Nature's emergency is our emergency too'**
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