



## **HB 2379 Testimony**

*May 16th 2019*

TO: Senate Natural Resources Committee  
Chair Senator Michael Dembrow  
Vice Chair Senator Alan Olsen  
Senator Floyd Prozanski  
Senator Arnie Roblan  
Senator Cliff Benz

RE: Opposition to HB 2379 A- Engrossed

Dear Senate Natural Resources Committee,

The Native Fish Society (NFS) is a 501(c)3 conservation non-profit, dedicated to utilizing the best available science to advocate for the protection and recovery of wild, native fish and promote the stewardship of the habitats that sustain us all. NFS has over 3500 members and supporters, 90 River Stewards, and 12 Fellows that help safeguard wild fish in their homewaters across the Pacific Northwest.

NFS River Stewards, staff, and supporters live, work, and recreate in the waters of Oregon and are interested in the recovery of threatened and sensitive populations of native fish. It has come to our attention that the Senate Natural Resource Committee is contemplating legislation impacting wild Spring Chinook which spawn in the Rogue River. Native Fish Society staff have followed HB 2379 since it was originally written, and question its efficacy in contributing to a future with abundant wild fish, free flowing rivers, and thriving local communities. Additionally, over 70 of our mutual constituents have sent you letters describing their priorities in restoring the Rogue's wild Spring Chinook, and urging you to vote "No" on this bill.

Throughout Oregon, most populations of Spring Chinook are listed as endangered or threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act. The Rogue is one of the few examples of where wild populations have avoided listing, and have been trending positive over the past decade. In an article entitled "The Springer Revival" published in 2017, it noted that in spite of drought, poor ocean conditions, and three of the hottest years on record, the wild productivity rose to an estimated 15,300 fish in 2015. The commitment of federal and state agencies, sport fishing guides, and grassroots conservationists to realize our shared vision of abundant, wild fish is starting to pay off.

Lastly, from our communication with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, we understand that a new multispecies planning process, similar to the management plan now guiding the North and Central Oregon Coast, is in the early stages of development. This management plan will build upon the recommendations in the existing “Rogue Spring Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan and Comprehensive Assessment”. We see this as the best opportunity for stakeholders to provide input to future management decisions in an open and transparent manner. This bill’s uncertain financial ramifications, and the indeterminate legal impact, could jeopardize the progress we’ve made with wild Spring Chinook in the Rogue.

I urge you to vote “No” on HB 2379 and let the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife continue a science-based recovery of the Rogue’s iconic wild Spring Chinook on their path to abundance for the benefit of the fish, the ecosystem, and the human communities that depend on them.

Thank you for your consideration on this important topic.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Conrad Gowell".

Conrad Gowell  
Fellowship Program Director  
Native Fish Society