



Oregon Association of
Conservation Districts

To: House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

From: Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD)

Re: Support HB 2032 – Regional Rulemaking

Chair Witt and Committee Members,

The Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) supports HB 2032. OACD represents Oregon's 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts, which are special districts governed by countywide elected boards. The Districts protect and enhance soil quality, water quality and quantity, and habitat by supporting voluntary conservation in partnership with private landowners and managers as well as federal, state, and nonprofit partners.

In the 2019 Regular Session, HB 2437 was passed authorizing maintenance in agricultural drainage channels without a removal or fill permit but providing an alternative agency review process. This bill was a compromise between environmental, farming, and ranching groups to maintain the drainage channels. As authorized in the original legislation base rules have been adopted. But during the rulemaking process it was determined that it would be most prudent to phase implementation throughout the State providing regional rulemaking opportunities.

HB 2032 allows the rules for implementing HB 2437 to be phased in an orderly manner over a 5-year period, by region. The application of the rules in the Willamette Basin will be different from application of the rules are applied in Eastern Oregon. OACD agrees that this is good policy. It allows the rules to be tested before widespread implementation and lets the stakeholders in each region have a say in what happens in their region.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input in your decision-making process.

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