



## The Habitat Institute

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RE: House Bill 2913 ~ Let the Bill Sunset

House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources Members

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing to ask you to let House Bill 2913 that created the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund go to sunset. Bill 2913 was desperate attempt by well-intended people to obtain funding for the Oregon Dept of Fish and Wildlife program.

My reason for this request is the basic premise for the bill, which requires a match of 1:1 ratio to acquire the state money. As legislatures (and others that support this bill) it sends a message that our natural resources are not worth being fully funded by the state with public money. Bill 2913 forms the basis for a state run charity program. I don't see other organizations having to meet a private money match in natural resources. Specifically, look at the Oregon Forest Resource Institute that is funded by public taxes and the Forest Companies have been using it as a lobbying entity (see OPB 8/4/2020 – *How a public institute in Oregon became a de facto lobbying arm of the timber industry*). By allowing this bill to continue shows the public that are valuable fish and wildlife resources and for people to enjoy the outdoors are not parity with other state funded natural resource programs like forestry.

Further, the bill is flawed at this point in time because it may be opening a Pandora Box. That is, regarding private contributions are you willing to open our natural resources to manipulation by cryptocurrency? That is, are you willing to accept 20 Bitcoins as a match for \$1,000,000? Funding is not clear on this matter.

The Institute does support a modified HB 2600; please see our submitted comments.

Very Best,

Thomas O'Neill – Director  
The Habitat Institute