

I have Lived in Oregon Since I was ten years old. I remember fishing the Applegate and Rogue Rivers as a young boy and would marvel at the quality and quantity of fish caught. In 2008, at 44 years old I was in a tragic helicopter crash that killed nine people and where I was severely burned over 70 percent of my body. While I was in a drug induced recovery, I would have dreams of when I was young fishing Oregon rivers and catching beautiful river Stealhead. As my only form of psychological therapy, I started fishing again in 2013 after a 30-year break. To say that catching my first Stealhead was a challenge is an understatement. I fished almost every day for six weeks before I finally hooked and landed my first fish, which I released unharmed. Had I not been there for my own personal recovery I probably would have given up. It was not that I had forgotten everything I had learned from when I was young about river fishing, it was also, that there were fewer fish in the rivers systems to be caught. With this thought in mind, I spent a day and traveled up to Cole Rivers Hatchery to see the operation. I was appalled at what I discovered. The hatchery was maybe running at 20% capacity and it appeared that there was no concern for the operation to be operated any higher. It was then that I realized the hatchery program for the state of Oregon was severely broke. I remember when Lost Creek dam and Cole River Hatchery was built and what it did for the river fishing experience and the economy in the early 1980's. It is my belief that anything we can do to improve the fishing experience on our Oregon rivers is a benefit for our youth, the family, the fisherman, the businesses, and our economy just to name a few. It is my hope that careful consideration be given to HB3150 and that it is given approval. Thank you for your time if you read all of this, there are those of us that appreciate what you do.

Respectfully,

William H. Coultas