



OREGON HUNTERS ASSOCIATION

Protecting Oregon's Wildlife, Habitat and Hunting Heritage

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February 02, 2022

To:

The Honorable Pam Marsh and the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Re:

HB 4130

Chair Marsh and members of the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

Oregon Hunters Association (OHA), and its 10,000 conservation-minded members support additional funding sources for construction of wildlife passage structures, and therefore we strongly support HB 4130-1.

As conservationists, sportsmen and women aspire to bolster our deer, elk and other game populations for the benefit of all Oregonians. One way to do that is to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions on our highways via wildlife crossing structures. We also recognize and appreciate that the implementation of safe wildlife passage infrastructure benefits numerous wildlife species and alleviates human safety concerns that ungulates present on our roadways.

OHA has contributed more than \$125,000 to the Gilchrist wildlife underpass fencing and has been involved in wildlife passage solutions for over 4 years. Despite teaming with 20 partners, we have to date completed only 60 percent of the needed fencing. While OHA is pleased to have contributed to the success of these initial projects that demonstrate the effectiveness of wildlife crossings, it is clear that this is not a sustainable funding model for these essential crossings moving forward and a more robust state and federal funding solution is necessary.

Migratory wildlife need to move seasonally, and highways can be barriers that restrict these essential movements, so the issue extends far beyond direct wildlife mortality on roads. Highways are likely limiting wildlife population growth rates via wildlife-vehicle collisions as well as inhibiting wildlife migration.

We applaud the work and leadership of Rep. Helm and other members of this committee for their support of this bill to introduce a much-needed solution to fund on-the-ground projects aimed to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions and improve habitat connectivity in Oregon.

Please direct questions to OHA Conservation Coordinator, Tyler Dungannon, via td@oregonhunters.org.

Sincerely,

Tyler Dungannon
Conservation Coordinator
Oregon Hunters Association