



February 3, 2022

Senator Jeff Golden, Chair
Senator Bill Kenemer, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery

Re: Trout Unlimited Supports Senate Bills 1501-1 and 1502, and House Bill 4055-2

Dear Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Kenemer, and Members of the Committee,

Trout Unlimited (“TU”) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of cold-water fish (such as trout, salmon, and steelhead) and their habitats. The organization has more than 350,000 members and supporters nationwide, including over 3,500 members in Oregon. TU and its members are committed to caring for Oregon rivers so future generations can experience the joy of wild trout and salmon.

TU supports Senate Bills 1501-1 and 1502, and House Bill 4055-2 (together, the “PFA Legislation”).

The PFA Legislation is a product of the mediated Private Forest Accord signed on October 30, 2021. It comprises: (1) significant environmental protection upgrades to the Oregon Forest Practices Act per Senate Bill 1501-1, (2) a tax credit for certain small forestland owners pursuant to Senate Bill 1502, and (3) a harvest tax that will fund environmental mitigation per House Bill 4055-2. All three bills (including the one not before this Committee) are necessary components of the PFA Legislation package.

TU expects the PFA Legislation to markedly improve water quality and fish habitat in Oregon rivers by: (i) increasing riparian buffers for timber harvest activities near streams (whether fish-bearing or not), (ii) adding protections against erosion of steep slopes in logging areas, and (iii) creating a new system for cataloguing – and then completing – road system and fish passage improvement projects to benefit aquatic species and water quality. The package also provides key incentives and funding mechanisms to implement these policy changes.

These bills will serve Oregonians by improving environmental conditions on private lands subject to the Oregon Forest Practices Act – and the areas downstream of them – while also providing a roadmap towards improved regulatory certainty for Oregon’s timber economy.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on this legislation, and please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

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