

# **The Northwest Guides and Anglers Association**

*To protect, enhance, and promote healthy sportfisheries and the ecosystems they depend on in the Pacific Northwest.*



February 3, 2022

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery  
900 Court Street NE, Room 453,  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Golden and Members of the Committee,

My name is Bob Rees, Executive Director of the NW Guides and Anglers Association, representing around 60 guide and charter businesses, largely in the state of Oregon. I am also a 26-year professional fishing guide and 6<sup>th</sup> generation Oregonian.

My organization was proud to sign the original MOU in 2020, we supported the negotiating team throughout the process.

We are here testifying in **STRONG** support for SB 1501 and SB 1502, which recognize the need for improved recovery strategies for Oregon's greatest natural resources: fish, forests, and clean water.

There are five key elements of the legislation that resonate with our community:

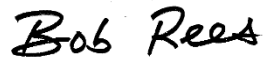
- 1) It will improve water quality in our state. Despite Oregon's historical Forest Practices Act drafted around 40 years ago, science and public outcry has called for improved policy to meet the needs of future Oregonians. SB 1501 has brought together key stakeholders to draft that new direction and their hard work is embodied in this bill. The bill recognizes the need for improved water quality through the expansion of riparian buffers and the reduction of logging on steep slopes that have contributed to lethally warm waters and sedimentation of our streams. It's important to note, that under current law, every major watershed on the north coast **FAILS** to meet the minimum standard for the spawning and rearing of wild fish on the north coast. Juvenile and adult salmonids are literally cooking to death most summers in too many watersheds.
- 2) It recognizes that fish are a forest product too. Outdoor recreation in the state of Oregon is nearly a \$3 billion/year industry and the north coast where many of the Private Forest Accord's benefits will be realized, leads the state in travel-related expenditures, making it one of the greatest transfers of wealth from urban to rural communities. What better way to recognize the value and importance of our rural communities than enabling a more steady flow of cash to local businesses in the

future?

- 3) It gives Oregon's salmon and steelhead the best chance for recovery. During my first 10 years of being a professional fishing guide, our industry lost consumptive "access" to 5 of the 6 wild salmonid runs on the north coast. Wild coho, spring Chinook, steelhead, chum and cutthroat trout **CLOSED** to catch and keep fishing. While we've seen a very modest return to some catch and keep fishing, consumptive opportunity for wild fish remains very restrictive, thus compromising our opportunity to bring in customers that have that desire, of which there are many.
  
- 4) Finally, SB 1501 effectively puts an end to the historic conflict that has plagued stakeholders for decades. When the giants of fish and forestry come together to find tangible solutions to critical issues, its important for the legislative body to recognize and honor the compromises and commitments these communities have chiseled out after decades of frustration. This legislation provides a pathway forward that recovers our wild fish, and secures timber harvest opportunity for private timberland owners for generations to come.

Thank you for taking up this critical piece of legislation, we urge this committee to pass forward, this critical piece of legislation for the future of all Oregonians.

Sincerely,



Bob Rees, Executive Director  
NW Guides and Anglers Association