

Submitter: Stephen Mealey  
On Behalf Of: McKenzie River Guides Association  
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources  
Measure: SB65

McKenzie

River Guides Association

P.O. Box 464

Walterville, Oregon 97489

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Senator Jeff Golden  
Chairman, Natural Resources Committee  
<https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/golden>

Senator Floyd Prozanski  
Member, Natural Resources Committee  
<https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/prozanski>

Dear Senators Golden and Prozanski:

THE MCKENZIE RIVER GUIDES ASSOCIATION (MRGA) IS OPPOSED TO SB 65. LOCALLY RAISED AND DISTRIBUTED FISH ARE MUCH BETTER IN LOCAL RIVERS

AND STREAMS THAN NON-LOCAL FISH. A MANDATORY 20% PROCUREMENT OF NON-LOCAL FISH FOR LOCAL RIVERS AND STREAMS WOULD LIKELY

DIMINISH THE QUALITY OF MANY FISHING EXPERIENCES. Such procurement could be appropriate for ponds, lakes, and reservoirs.

MRGA main experience with non-local hatchery fish in the McKenzie comes from Desert Springs fish stocked in 2018. While there were some problems with distribution,

the main problem was with the feeding habits of the Desert Springs fish themselves: THEY DID NOT READILY RISE TO DRY FLIES AS IS THE HABIT OF FISH REARED

LOCALLY AT LEABURG HATCHERY AND DISTRIBUTED. While there was much speculation on the reasons why, there was consensus among McKenzie River guides that.

the Desert Springs fish were primarily sub-surface feeders. This was a distinct challenge for the river-boat fishing guides who have historically and traditionally

offered a  
mostly dry-fly fishing experience to clients.

MRGA is a not-for-profit corporation (501c4) founded in 1931 to, among other things, aid in the conservation, restoration, and management of the fish life in the McKenzie

River. MRGA has 145 members, 40% are active guides, the remainder are mission-supporting Associates. Each year, MRGA guides serve clients who enjoy more than 2,000

recreation user days fishing for trout, salmon and steelhead, and floating on the McKenzie River. A reasonable estimate is that annually MRGA guides serve over 1,000

angler clients contributing over a quarter million dollars to the local economy. MRGA appreciates the opportunity to comment on SB 65.

Ethan Nickel

/s/

President, MRGA