



February 27, 2023

To: Joint Subcommittee on Natural Resources

**Re: Support for SB5521**

Greetings Chairs Dembrow and Pham:

The Columbia Slough Watershed Council is a nonprofit based in Portland, OR. CSWC serves the community and industry based in the Watershed by protecting and enhancing the Columbia Slough and its watershed through community engagement, education, and restoration.

CSWC currently receives funding from an Oregon State Marine Board grant for our Bilingual Paddle Program. Over the past year this funding helped CSWC to grow program outreach and attendance as well as purchase new, and much needed, equipment (paddles, PFDs and canoes). To give the committee a snapshot of what this critical funding has helped us to accomplish during the current grant cycle:

## Events

- From July 1, 2022, through February 14, 2023, Columbia Slough Watershed Council held 24 paddling events. Twenty of these were specifically for marginalized populations, and of these, 4 were bilingual events. During these events, the program engaged with 381 participants.
- Between February 15 and June 30, 2023, CSWC expects to engage with 355 participants across 16 paddle events, 9 of which will be held specifically for marginalized populations, and of these, 4 will have more than one language offered.

## Trainings

- During spring 2023, CSWC will offer a spring Paddle Team Training. The training has been revised and this year's Paddle Team Training will include a required virtual webinar orientation, as well as an 8-hour in person training in April, first aid and CPR training and an on water paddle safety training. CSWC expects about 40 participants to make up our volunteer base doubling our volunteer capacity this year.
- CSWC will also offer a second Paddle Team Training in Russian and Ukrainian in June where we expect about 8 participants. These participants will make up our Slavic Paddle Team and support our events held in Russian and Ukrainian in 2023.
- These numbers do not reflect nor include cleanup events or on-water events held through other CSWC programming.



We do not expect these to be our final numbers through June 2023, as we have intentionally left space in our event calendar to add even more on-water events in collaboration with community partners.

CSWC is already busy planning the 2023 summer with 18 events on the calendar, and space and intention to expand our offerings for our community through the summer months. This programming will include a paddle team leader training in Spanish for Latinx community groups and members.

The funding received from OSMB is crucial to the success and continuation of the CSWC bi-lingual paddle team program. For these reasons, CSWC supports Bills **SB 5521**, relating to approval of the OSMB budget.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather King".

Heather D. King  
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Columbia Slough Watershed Council  
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