

February 29, 2023

Oregon House of Representatives

900 Court St.

Salem, Ore 97301

RE: HB 3159—Recovering Oregon’s Wildlife

Oregonians share a unique pride in the idea that our public lands support healthy populations of fish and wildlife. These resources, our shared wealth, benefit all citizens of this state and the numbers reflect it. Outdoor recreation drives \$15.6 billion in direct consumer spending. Access to healthy public lands and waters is foundational to housing market and tourism economy. Over the years, Oregonians have recognized this and invested accordingly, but Habitat loss and degradation, climate change, invasive species, among other things, are taking a toll on Oregon's birds, mammals, fish, amphibians, reptiles, and pollinators. The Recovering Oregon's Wildlife Fund is a bold, proactive solution that will allow Oregon’s Wildlife managers to implement the Oregon Conservation and Nearshore Strategies and bring forth a new era of wildlife stewardship for the benefit of Oregonians of every background.

Oregonians are as diverse as the landscape they inhabit and may seem divided, but we share common ground. Similarly, the coalition bringing this bill might seem strange bedfellows, but Hunters, anglers and environmentalists with boots on the ground understand the level of investment required to conserve Oregon’s ecological integrity and preserve our outdoor heritage for future generations.

The Recovering Oregon’s Wildlife Fund (a sub-account of the Fish and Wildlife Account) would be financed by increasing the statewide Transient Lodging Tax by 1.5%, generating approximately \$60 million annually, 62% of which would be shouldered by out-of-state visitors, all while maintaining one of the lowest transient lodging tax rates in the nation.

Oregon’s fish and wildlife require a diverse and reliable funding pathway in order to weather the challenges posed by continued development, habitat degradation, climate change, increased recreation, population growth, disease and invasive species. We urge you to join us in Recovering Oregon’s Wildlife and voting yes on HB 3159.

With Gratitude, the Oregon Chapter Board of Backcountry Hunters Anglers

ORBHA Contact for HB3187: Tristan Henry, ORBHA Co-Chair
oregon@backcountryhunters.org Backcountry Hunters & Anglers is the voice for our
public lands, waters and wildlife.