



American Fisheries Society Oregon Chapter

OR Chapter AFS: PO Box 8062 Portland, OR 97207-8062 www.orafs.org

Date: March 14, 2023

RE: OREGON CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY OPPOSITION TO HOUSE BILL 3382 RELATING TO PORT REGULATORY EXCLUSION

Co-Chairs Sen. Gorsek and Rep. McLain and Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation

The Oregon Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (ORAFS) comprises over 500 fisheries and aquatics science professionals from federal, state, and tribal agencies, colleges and universities, diverse private employers, college students, and retirees. ORAFS was established in 1964 as a chapter of the American Fisheries Society. Our mission is to improve the conservation and sustainability of Oregon fishery resources and their aquatic ecosystems for long-term public benefit by advancing science, education and public discourse concerning fisheries and aquatic science and by promoting the development of fisheries professionals.

ORAFS members are concerned with HB 3382 for three primary reasons.

- 1) **Estuarine habitats are among the most productive on earth.** Estuaries are at the saltwater-fresh water interface and these environments play an essential role in dynamic processes that affect migratory species including salmon, steelhead, Pacific lamprey, sturgeon, Dungeness crab, and numerous other culturally, ecologically, and economically important fish and wildlife. Oregon's estuaries have experienced extensive negative impacts over the nearly two hundred years of development on Oregon's Coast. Port development that includes deep water dredging and industrial development will degrade estuarine habitats and undo the habitat restoration that has been underway for the last 30 years.
- 2) **Circumvents the State's environmental laws.** Oregon has been a pioneer in comprehensive land management and the State's Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) plays a key role in assisting communities to achieve all land use goals. Statewide Goal #16 protects the long-term values, diversity, and benefits of estuaries and associated wetlands. Allowing ports to pursue development without following the established regulatory framework would set a precedent that other industries would likely apply in pursuit of development without regulatory compliance. This bill would significantly weaken Oregon's land use planning system.
- 3) **Smart growth open for public review and comment.** Ports are essential for supporting local communities, and more broadly the state and West Coast. However, port authorities should be required, like all industries, municipalities, and individual landowners, to follow a sensible regulatory process that includes public review and comment, especially for actions that have the potential to permanently impact critical ecological systems, water quality, and resiliency to sea level rise.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our opposition to HB 3382.

Respectfully,

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