



## *Burns Paiute Tribe*

*Natural Resources Department*

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March 26, 2023

Oregon State Legislature  
House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon

*Re: Recommendations for HB 3086 on changes to the appointment of Oregon's Fish and Wildlife Commission members*

Dear Committee Members:

The Burns Paiute Tribe's (Tribe, BPT) Natural Resources Department (NRD) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes to the appointment of the State Fish and Wildlife Commission members. The Burns Paiute Tribe is a federally-recognized sovereign nation whose aboriginal territory includes much of central-southeastern Oregon. The Tribe's historic territory is home to a diversity of people, wildlife, and fish that will be directly impacted by the policy and rule-making decisions of the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODF&W) Commission. The BPT has an abiding interest in protecting and enhancing the fish and wildlife and cultural resources of its ancestral territory.

The Tribe's NRD supports the proposed amendment to Commissioners qualifications to include experience in working with Tribes and understanding the deep and lasting relationships Oregon's federally recognized Tribes have to lands, water, and natural resources that the Commission governs. If these qualifications are paired with equality in regional representation across the State, Commissioners will understand the unique challenges facing landscapes east of the cascades. Many of Oregon's Tribes have existing agreements with the Fish and Wildlife Commission and their natural resources staff work closely and regularly with their counterparts at ODF&W. The unique tribal connection with the natural environment, inherent sovereign rights and agreements, and regular co-management responsibilities are strong incentives and justification to include these qualifications for Commissioners. It is important that Commissioners forge connections with tribal partners and understand how and why tribal traditional knowledge and current management practices are inviolable to the best possible future of Oregon's places, people, and natural resources. We recommend the addition of the following parts to the description of those

Commissioner qualifications:

*(7) All members of the commission shall have: a general knowledge of fish and wildlife issues; an understanding of the role and relationships Oregon Federally recognized tribes have to lands, water, and natural resources that the commission governs; and, an understanding of the operation and functions of public policy boards and commissions. In making appointments to the commission, the Governor shall consider appointing members who possess natural resource backgrounds such as backgrounds in commercial fishing, recreational fishing, hunting, agriculture, forestry, conservation, and traditional knowledge.*

Tribal Nations allowed for the settlement of the region by immigrants through entering into treaties and other agreements with the U.S. federal government. Though the terms of those agreements have not always been honored by federal and State governments, those agreements provided some basis for cooperation, negotiation and compromise. Tribal-State relations continue to mature and result in cooperative management arrangements that benefit all of Oregon's residents and resources. Continuing this success and finding common ground for sustainable management and harvesting of fish, wildlife, and other natural resources is crucial to both Tribes and the State. Indemnifying qualities in Commission members that support this Tribal-State progress will ensure that historically underrepresented Tribal interests are considered and more frequently indorsed in future Commission decisions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Calla Hagle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Calla Hagle  
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