

April 2, 2023

From: Patrick Rutten /s/

Subject: Letter of Support for H.B. 2206

This letter is to offer my strong support for House Bill 2206, the Salmon Credit Habitat Restoration Bill. As the former Southwest Region Supervisor for the NOAA Restoration Center, I have spent years in the conservation and restoration of salmonids listed as Endangered or Threatened by the Federal Endangered Species Act.

Perhaps the biggest impediment to salmonid recovery that I experienced in my career was gaining access to private lands, overcoming the permitting process, and funding projects at a scale that matter. H.B. 2206 is a milestone piece of legislation that gets to the heart of voluntary landowner cooperation and the implementation of large scale habitat restoration projects. The fiscal benefits to taxpayers, landowners and recovery funding are tremendous given the proposed tax credit incentives.

In my experience, there has not been any restoration program like H.B. 2206 where the government and landowners cooperate to expedite and implement such a mutually beneficial outcome. More importantly, the incentives and benefits to cooperate and build mutual trust are invaluable. Salmonid recovery will never happen with landowner involvement.

In reviewing the Bills language I see all the safeguards and program implementation language required. The Oregon Legislature and State agencies involved in developing H.B. 2206 should be commended for such forward thinking and for stepping up to build a public/private for the mutual benefit of everyone.