

Submitter: Mike Okoniewski
On Behalf Of: West Coast Pelagic Conservation Group
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: HB3382

The West Coast Pelagic Conservation Group membership is composed fishermen and processors that do business in all three west coast states and Alaska. We thank you for the opportunity to testify:

We herein incorporate and support by reference the letter sent by the Pacific Fisheries Management Council (Council) on May 15, 2023 to Representative Wright: Quoted excerpt:

"Potential impacts from dredging and port maintenance activities:
We provide a brief summary of potential impacts from dredging and port maintenance activities and would be happy to provide additional details upon request. Dredging and maintenance of ports and harbors presents a particular concern for the Pacific Council, due to the potential impacts to numerous fish. The removal of bottom sediments during dredging operations can disrupt the entire benthic community and eliminate a significant percentage of the feeding habitat available to fish. Dredging creates turbidity plumes and releases contaminants from suspended sediments that can adversely impact the migration of salmon smolts. Dredging also entrains benthic, epibenthic, and mid-water organisms. Direct and indirect effects of dredging can also result in harm to submerged aquatic vegetation such as eelgrass beds, which are an especially important estuarine habitat feature, providing spawning and rearing areas for salmon and many other species. Although we focus on dredging activities here, other port maintenance activities such as dock construction and repair, and deployment of navigation aids also present potential impacts to important fisheries habitats. Additional information on dredging impacts is included in our Pacific Salmon FMP EFH" Appendix, Section 4.2.2.13)

For reasons stated in the PFMC letter and because the state environmental laws and regulations are promulgated to protect our environment and ecological systems, both

human and natural, we were shocked to hear that the Oregon legislature was considering the reckless action to abrogate those laws that to expedite and grant special privileges to certain enterprises regardless of environmental consequence. Frankly we are appalled to think this would go forward at all. Our fishermen and processors who fish and live in Oregon cannot believe that our legal system would even allow such an action to happen. We trust you will listen to the PFMC letter and their concerns and those of numerous others and drop this plan as soon as possible.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Mike Okoniewski

West Coast Pelagic Conservation Group