

Lane County  
Audubon  
Society



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Please accept this testimony on behalf of the Lane County Audubon Society in support of HB 4148 which would provide significant action on wildlife issues. Lane County Audubon Society members are dedicated to the conservation of our natural environment, with a primary focus on birds and other wildlife and their habitats.

1. Wildlife and zoonotic disease prevention and response. The bill provides for equipment and capacity that allows the Oregon and Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory and the state Wildlife Health Lab to research and respond to highly contagious disease threats, which both decimate wildlife and carry the risk of infecting humans. I hope we've learned something from the recent pandemic and consider this a no-brainer.

2. Invasive species prevention and response. We have an Oregon Invasive Species Council to deal with invasive species, but their hands have been tied by an extended lack of funding. The recent identification of quagga mussels in the Snake River flowing into the Columbia and the invasive sudden oak death are just some of the invasives that threaten to disrupt ecosystems. It's a lot more efficient and less expensive to deal with them before they are well established in numbers that will destroy native species so the time to act is now.

3. Wildlife coexistence and conflict reduction. Humans are really good at spreading out and developing large areas of land. When we do, we remove habitat for many species while at the same time, not tolerating those that are able to live near to us. We have long sought species management plans that don't involve killing them. The Wildlife Coexistence bill would provide funding for five ODFW Wildlife Coexistence Biologists, an ODFW Coexistence Campaign Outreach Coordinator and a Coexistence/Living with Wildlife Campaign, as well as small grants for Wildlife Rehabilitation Centers. The goal is to educate people on living alongside wildlife, and advance humane solutions when conflicts arise.

4. Wildlife corridors and road crossings. Safe road crossing can be an effective solution to reduce vehicle collisions with wildlife, harmful to both people and the animals that are hit. Habitat connectivity is important to healthy wildlife populations for genetic reasons as well as the ability to find resources. This bill provides guidance to ODOT (Oregon Department of Transportation) on how to successfully work toward this goal.

We believe each part of this bill addresses real and current concerns and that the solutions provided by passing the bill will be impactful.

Thank you for your consideration.

Debbie Schlenoff, Ph.D.  
Conservation Chair  
Lane County Audubon Society

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