



**Oregon Natural Desert Association Comment on -7 Amendment to HB 4090  
February 27, 2024**

Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA) is a public interest conservation organization with a mission to protect, defend, and restore Oregon's high desert. ONDA maintains offices in Bend and Portland, and represents more than 18,000 members and supporters in Oregon and across the United States.

Climate change is an existential threat to desert ecosystems in Oregon, and southeastern Oregon is warming faster than most of the rest of the country. ONDA appreciates the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions and we also have a long history of working with partners to achieve shared goals of responsibly developing renewable energy resources.

HB 4090 would eliminate state Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC) review and certification of certain facilities proposed on federal public lands. ONDA is frustrated by the rapid pace this bill has moved through the legislative process, particularly given the importance of public lands to wildlife habitat and migration, biodiversity conservation, and many other public resources and values. Wildlife needs are not always adequately or predictably addressed in federal environmental review, and the pace at which this bill moved was not conducive to the kind of deliberative and inclusive conversation necessary when addressing an issue as complex as the elimination of state regulatory review.

In spite of our frustrations, we appreciate that bill proponents were willing to work in good faith to develop the -7 amendment to preserve the state's role in determining facility siting to accommodate wildlife needs, consistent with state law, regulations, plans and policies. The amendment establishes a regulatory floor that, if the Legislature were to quickly proceed with eliminating EFSC review of renewable energy siting on federal public lands, would help provide for continued state review and engagement in these important wildlife-related issues.