

Lane County
Audubon
Society



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Dear Chair Lively, Vice Chairs Gamba and Levy, and Members of the Committee,

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Lane County Audubon Society in support of HB 2980, the Wildlife Stewardship bill. 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.

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. Lane County Audubon hears from community members frequently about wildlife coexistence issues through our "Bird-line" via telephone, through email, and at outreach events. We have learned that this is a real issue for Oregon residents and that people are seeking information and help. We have also worked closely with the Cascades Raptor Center and refer people to Chintimini Wildlife Center. Rehabilitation Centers serve a critical role for wildlife and for education.

The Wildlife Stewardship program is supported by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and a strong coalition of organizations. The Wildlife Stewardship bill would create 3 new wildlife coexistence biologist positions stationed around the state, develop a "Living with Wildlife" public education and outreach campaign, and establish a grant program to support Oregon's wildlife rehabilitation centers which serve on the frontlines of human wildlife interactions. The goal is to educate people on living alongside wildlife, and advance humane solutions when conflicts arise. 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