



OREGON HUNTERS ASSOCIATION

Protecting Oregon's Wildlife, Habitat and Hunting Heritage

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February 3, 2025

House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Re: HB 2978 Support

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald, Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Hunters Association (OHA) is Oregon's largest state-centric hunter conservation organization, representing over 12,000 sportsmen and women throughout 26 chapters in the state. Our mission is 'to protect Oregon's wildlife, habitat, and hunting heritage' and we strongly support science-based wildlife and habitat management.

OHA is in strong support of HB 2978.

OHA has long worked collaboratively with conservation organizations, state and federal agencies, and private interests to further wildlife and human safety on Oregon Highways. Since the notable installation of the Highway 97 wildlife undercrossing near Lava Butte proved the effectiveness of safe crossings for over 30 species, statewide understanding of the critical need for safe wildlife crossings, habitat connectivity, and wildlife habitat improvement has expanded public support for legislative actions like HB 2978.

HB 2978 builds on previous policy language by requiring Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to work in conjunction with Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW) to prioritize opportunities for crossings structures while also reducing impacts of transportation infrastructure components on wildlife connectivity.

HB 2978 establishes an advisory group made up of diverse participants which helps to increase communication among all parties working to improve wildlife crossings and maintain connectivity priorities. The collaborative approach between state agencies, federal partners, and nonprofit organizations is needed to appropriately leverage all resources available to elevate Oregon's wildlife crossings and connectivity work.

The broad coalition of support for HB 2978 speaks to the vested interests of conservation organizations across the state in protecting wildlife migration corridors, critical habitat needs, and the safety of Oregonians on our roadways.

Thank you for your time,
Amy Patrick
OHA Policy Director