

Dear Co-Chairs Rep. Helm and Rep. Owens, Vice Chair Rep. Finger McDonald, and all Members of the Committee,

The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation supports HB 2984, which would appropriate funds to the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund (OCRF) within the state's Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Xerces Society is a national non-profit dedicated to the conservation of insects, other invertebrates, and their habitats. Oregon is where Xerces was founded and where its main operations remain today. Our biologists work on a range of species, including native bee and butterfly pollinators, beetles, and mollusks.

A state's Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) is a roadmap for proactively conserving fish and wildlife to prevent species from becoming endangered. Great time, effort, and expertise go into these plans, yet the crucial actions they outline are often underfunded. **OCRF is one of the few dedicated programs that focuses on the implementation of the Oregon Conservation Strategy** (OR's SWAP). OCRF is also one of few funding sources for local organizations to work with ODFW to promote conservation of Oregon's wildlife and to make the outdoors more accessible to its residents and to visitors who come to experience the state's natural beauty. Indeed, **outdoor recreation supports \$15.6 billion in total consumer spending, supporting 224,000 full and part-time jobs in Oregon and \$9.3 billion in wages.**

In North America, state wildlife agencies are the first line of defense against the ongoing loss of beneficial invertebrates because they have the local expertise and community connections to develop and execute conservation actions while considering the needs of local stakeholders. HB 2984 would provide necessary resources to ODFW to prevent the federal listing of species under the Endangered Species Act. Funding OCRF will support ODFW in conserving the state's rich and biodiverse natural heritage.

Sincerely,



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