



February 4, 2025

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire

Re: Eugene Chapter TU opposes Senate Bill 512 (North Umpqua Hatchery Summer Steelhead)

Dear Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and Members of the Committee,

Trout Unlimited (TU) is a national organization dedicated to caring for rivers and streams so our children can experience the joy of wild and native trout and salmon. Based in the Eugene-Springfield area, the Redsidies Chapter of TU was established in 1998 and has a membership of nearly 700 individuals and businesses. Our work focuses on conservation and restoration in the McKenzie, Middle Fork Willamette, Umpqua, and Rogue River basins as well as community-building, and angling education efforts. As Redsidies members, we consider ourselves incredibly fortunate to have easy access to these inspiring waterways and fisheries.

The Redsidies Chapter of Trout Unlimited opposes Senate Bill 512.

This bill mandates a deeply flawed and costly restart of the Rock Creek Hatchery summer steelhead program. Not only does it jeopardize the recovery of wild summer steelhead in the North Umpqua River, but it also fails to provide any meaningful benefit to the restoration of the fishery. The Rock Creek Hatchery program was wisely concluded by the ODFW Commission in 2022 due to its failures to meet conservation metrics. Furthermore, the destruction of the Hatchery's facility in the 2020 wildfires, coupled with its defunct infrastructure and ongoing water quality issues, make it an ill-conceived and irresponsible recipient of public dollars.

The North Umpqua River is an iconic Oregon waterway, and one that is the focus of much of the Redsidies' attention and concern. Because this bill ignores the recent data collected during ODFW's hatchery resilience reviews, invests taxpayer dollars in a failed hatchery program, and fails to benefit wild steelhead, the Redsidies strongly oppose Senate Bill 512.

Thank you for considering this input, and please reach out to me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jesse L. Robbins
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