

Submitter: George Hutchinson
On Behalf Of: HB2977
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural
Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2977

I just submitted testimony, but my email address had a mistake in it. This has my correct address. (gbhutch@outlook.com)

Having been a river rafting guide, snow skier, hiker, fisherman and one-time resident of Newport, I know that Oregon is home to incredible wildlife—from wild salmon in our streams to gray whales migrating along our coast. But nearly 300 species are at risk of extinction due to climate change and habitat loss. I think that while the Oregon Conservation and Nearshore Strategy are the most effective tools for recovering Oregon's vulnerable species, unfortunately, these programs have been underfunded. You legislators have a chance to change that. HB 2977 ("1% for Wildlife") would provide critical funding for wildlife conservation by increasing the state tourism tax—from 1.5% to 2.5%—ensuring visitors help protect the very landscapes and wildlife that make Oregon special. I am confident that this small change will make a big difference. To help conserve Oregon's incredible wildlife and the habitats it depends on, passing this bill is very important to my family, outdoors friends, and most every citizen I've spoken to about a modest bump in the state tourist (lodging) tax.