



February 21, 2025

Senator Sollman, Chair
Senator Brock Smith, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Energy and the Environment

Re: SB 222-1, NFS Supports efforts to monitor the expansion of smallmouth bass populations in Oregon's coast rivers and find long-term solutions

Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Brock Smith, and Members of the Committee,

Native Fish Society¹ supports efforts by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to monitor and eradicate smallmouth bass in Oregon's watersheds. Bass are an introduced and invasive fish that have come to flourish in rivers and waterbodies across the state. They are also voracious predators of native fish, often consuming juvenile resident and migratory species including salmon and steelhead. In many places, bass have been identified as a factor limiting the conservation and recovery of iconic native fish populations.

Managing bass populations more effectively has become a focus of ODFW, tribal nations, and angling and conservation groups. Efforts are underway in some watersheds to actively remove bass and suppress their populations substantially enough to benefit native fish. However, existing management technologies and methods are often cost-prohibitive and unlikely to control bass populations effectively in the long term.

Because smallmouth bass can quickly colonize new habitats, active monitoring may lead to more successful eradication efforts when new populations are identified and targeted early. Where smallmouth bass have already proliferated, we need to continue efforts to contain their spread. Importantly, we need to evaluate new methods that can provide for long-term, effective control of the species at scale.

Native Fish Society urges the state to support efforts to control smallmouth bass in Oregon to reduce harmful bass populations and contribute to the conservation and recovery of the state's native fish.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Fairbrother
Legislative & Policy Director

¹ The Native Fish Society is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit with a mission to restore abundant wild fish, free-flowing rivers, and thriving local communities across Oregon and the Pacific Northwest.