



**OREGON CHAPTER OF
THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**

PO Box 2378
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FROM: The Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society

TO: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

SUBJECT: HB 2342- ODFW fee increase - SUPPORT

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

The Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society (ORTWS) appreciates your consideration of HB 2342 and the opportunity to provide comments. ORTWS would like to express our strong support of this bill.

ORTWS represents nearly 600 wildlife professionals from many areas of public and private enterprises composed of students, scientists, educators, technicians, consultants, biologists, and land managers. These professionals in our organization dedicate their lives to managing, conserving, and studying wildlife populations and their habitats throughout Oregon. Our mission is to inspire, empower, and enable Oregon's wildlife professionals and students to promote science-based wildlife conservation and management through the participation and leadership of an open and inclusive community of members.

We are in support of HB 2342 because it closely aligns and supports our mission to promote the stewardship of wildlife and their habitats through the use of sound ecological information. Similarly, ORTWS strongly supports the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) mission to protect and enhance Oregon's fish and wildlife populations and their habitats for use and enjoyment by present and future generations. However, stagnant income, minimal General Fund disbursements, dramatic inflation, and increasing costs are threatening the ability for ODFW to implement that mission.

The fee adjustments found in HB 2342 will help ODFW to keep pace with increasing costs to operate and sustain core programs and employ top tier biologists tasked with managing Oregon's fish, wildlife, and habitats. It has been ten years since the last fee adjustment legislation and contemporary actions are overdue. Until diversified funding becomes a reality in Oregon, license fees will continue to be the primary funding source for on-the-ground action for all fish, wildlife, and habitats for the benefit of all Oregonians.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Regards,

ORTWS Board of Directors