

Submitter: Patricia Ormsbee  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3362

Please pass OR Bill 3362. Oregon is blessed with an incredible wealth of waterways that for decades have been compromised from adjacent roads and the more recent discovery of adverse impacts to water quality and aquatic species, including recreational and commercial fisheries, from chronic infusions of 6PPD-quinone toxins from the tires of passing vehicles. Clean water is the foundation of healthy and sustainable life for our entire planet. Mitigating the deliberate damage of our aquatic systems from tires is a fundamental responsibility of basic stewardship of Oregon waterways and is unquestionably an essential step and an obvious win for humans and nature alike.

OR Bill 3362 is also essential for funding strategic wildlife crossing projects to improve road safety for people and wildlife. There are estimated upwards of 6000 vehicle and wildlife collisions in Oregon each year. These collisions cause significant pain, expense and injury to humans. It's relatively recently that we've begun to study and understand the impact to wildlife of busy roadways and the imperative of providing safe crossings to support basic life needs of wildlife. Roads fragment habitat, create barriers, disrupt migration and breeding behavior, and kill a significant number of animals each year. Numerous species of wildlife will successfully use wildlife crossings. Yet, our roadways, especially our major roadways, most notably, I-5, I-84, and HWY 97 provide the perfect formula for wildlife barriers and collisions of a continuous center barrier - impassible by small, young, or frightened animals, and high speed traffic for most of the 24 hr. day. We are embarrassingly behind Oregon's need for wildlife crossings with 5 crossings completed. In comparison, WA has 22, CA 185, MT 81, WY 32, ID 17. Oregon has 5, just 5. Please get 3362 passed so we can get to this essential and overdue work.

OR Bill 3362 will also expand rail/transit options that will provide for more efficient mass transit. This is an essential step to reducing vehicle traffic and our contribution to deleterious climate impacts.