

Submitter: Christina Scarzello

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3501

Dear Co-Chairs Helm and Owens,

I am writing in opposition to HB 3501.

I am a fisherwoman and boater. I understand the need for clean water and "water-rights for fish". I've heard that water rights in Oregon are over-allocated and it's the fish and other riparian wildlife that lose out. Unlike other western states, Oregon lacks standards of review that protect the public interest when considering a water right transfer - it's really time to modernize the review process.

Instead of making it harder to consider effects on fish and wildlife, water quality, cultures, public health, and economies as HB 3501 proposes, the WRD should consider effects as mentioned previously in addition to the impacts on streamflows.

Because water rights have been held for many years, there is no easy process to evaluate water right impacts under existing climate conditions, except during the transfer and sales application process. Transfers (and sales) are opportune times to conduct a review to ensure the public interest is protected.

Oregon should be doing more to protect the public interest in water right transfer decisions, not barring the state from considering impacts to fish and wildlife, water quality, and other public values. I urge you to oppose HB 3501!

Sincerely, Christina Scarzello