



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

Co-Chair Helm	Representative Bobby Levy
Co-Chair Owens	Representative Marsh
Vice-Chair Finger McDonald	Representative McLain
Representative Boice	Representative Scharf
Representative Hartman	

From: Caylin Barter

Date: March 20, 2025

RE: **Neutral on HB 3116-2; Support for Oregon's Place-Based Planning Consistent with Rule**

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald, and Members of the Committee:

Wild Salmon Center offers these comments on HB 3116-2, which would direct the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) to:

- 1) “develop and implement a plan to address recommendations from the evaluation of the place-based water planning program and recommendations of the regional water planning program and recommendations of the regional water planning and management work group”;
- 2) produce a prototype water basin assessment;
- 3) generate a report on water planning in other states, the prototype water basin assessment, a schedule for completion of basin assessments, opportunities for cost savings, and recommendations for use of an integrated water portal; and
- 4) issue grants totalling \$3.35M to the conveners of the four place-based planning pilot areas to “support implementation of state-recognized place-based integrated water resources plans.”

Wild Salmon Center is neutral on HB 3116-2, and offers comments intended to resolve inconsistencies of the fourth topic listed above with the framework set forth in the newly adopted rules implementing the Place-Based Water Planning Fund created by HB 2010 (2023).

Wild Salmon Center is an international nonprofit headquartered in Oregon that has worked with local partners since 1992 to protect and restore the strongest remaining runs of Wild Pacific Salmon. We use science to drive policy, lead planning processes, and support implementation, and we know that the health of our water resources is directly linked to the recovery of our iconic wild fish and the vitality of our communities and economy. Low streamflows and high water temperatures are stressing even our healthiest salmon runs, and these problems are worsening due to climate change and increased human demand for water.

We support policies that improve our state's understanding and stewardship of our overstressed water supplies, and we believe that good water planning is critical to good management of this public resource. As a result, we have been proud of:

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1. our status as an active participant in and [charter signatory to the Mid Coast Water Planning Partnership](#) since 2020, including serving on the prioritization work group in 2023 and collaborating on the [early implementation work plan](#) throughout 2024;
2. our involvement in the National Policy Consensus Center’s participatory program [evaluation of the pilot phase](#) of place-based water planning in 2021;
3. our participation on the HB 5006 [State Supported Regional Water Planning and Management Work Group](#) in 2022;
4. our involvement in OWRD’s stakeholder meetings in 2022 to discuss development of a Place-Based Planning legislative concept to implement recommendations from the HB 5006 Work Group Final Report;
5. our [testimony on HB 3163](#) (base bill for content in HB 2010) in 2023, including our [collaboratively developed redlines to HB 3163](#) intended to restore consistency with the HB 5006 Work Group Final Report; and
6. our membership on and contributions to [OWRD’s Rules Advisory Committee](#) for the HB 2010-created Place-Based Water Planning Fund in 2024.

Throughout, Wild Salmon Center has advocated for robust state support for regional water planning as part of developing, implementing, and adaptively managing an integrated and balanced state water plan.

We encourage the Legislature to make use of the existing Place-Based Water Planning Fund that it created in 2023 to support not only the existing pilots, but also planning efforts in other geographies. **We do not support direct appropriations that functionally sidestep rules adopted just last week by the Oregon Water Resources Commission to implement HB 2010.** Doing so would allow the existing pilots to once again jump the line for state planning funding, and shortcuts the Legislature’s direction from 2023 right as the Fund is coming online.

Wild Salmon Center appreciates this opportunity to provide testimony on HB 3116-2 and remains committed to finding practical solutions to address Oregon’s critical needs for integrated state water planning.

Sincerely,



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