



To: Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire
From: Patricia Kramer, Consolidated Oregon Indivisible Network (COIN)
Re: Testimony in opposition to HB 512
Date: March 27, 2025

Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash, and member of the Committee

I am writing today on behalf of the Consolidated Oregon Indivisible Network (COIN) to express opposition to SB 512. COIN is a coalition of over 50 local Indivisible groups from across Oregon that cooperate and amplify their efforts to advance federal and state legislation and engage with elected officials to promote progressive causes that benefits all Oregonians.

We strongly oppose SB 512, which directs the State Fish and Wildlife Commission to operate a summer steelhead fish hatchery at the Rock Creek Hatchery and release the hatchery fish into the North Umpqua River.

Wild salmon populations, notably summer steelhead, have been in steep decline in the North Umpqua Basin for decades. In 2022, ODFW terminated the 64-year-old Rock Creek hatchery program on the North Umpqua River in an effort to restore wild summer steelhead populations. The Rock Creek Hatchery, the last hatchery in the Umpqua Basin, burned down in the 2020 Archie Creek Fire and would not be rebuilt. And at their June 2024 meeting, the ODFW approved their 2025-2027 budget which calls for the closure of the Rock Creek Hatchery.

The ODFW has projected peak river temperatures at the Rock Creek Hatchery as high as 80-85 degrees, as a result primarily of the scorched landscape resulting from the 2020 Archie Creek fire. These temperatures range from very unhealthy to lethal for both wild and hatchery salmon populations.

Nonetheless, proponents of this bill want the state to support a new hatchery so that they can have at least something to catch in the summer, despite the negative genetic and ecological harm involved in mixing hatchery fish with wild stocks.

Estimates to rebuild the hatchery range from \$17 million (by a logging company which supports the bill) to at least \$25 million (by the ODFW). The bill requests \$2 million from the General Fund. It is not clear at all in the ½-page text of the bill what these funds will accomplish.

In light of the precipitous decline of wild salmon populations in the North Umpqua Basin, the dangerously high water temperatures (for wild AND hatchery fish) which the river will now experience because of the wildfire-scorched landscape in which it now runs, and the lack of

information on how the requested funds will be used, we must strongly oppose passage of this bill out of Committee.

Respectfully,

Patricia Kramer, for the Consolidated Oregon Indivisible Network