



**To: Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire
Re. Support of SB 1153**

March 25, 2025

Dear Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash, and Members of the Committee,

The Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center based in Ashland Oregon represents approximately 10,000 members and supporters across Oregon and beyond. We support Senate Bill 1153 to ensure that aquatic habitat and water quality will be protected in water right transfers.

We know that water diversion in the Rogue and other parts of Oregon can have a large impact on water quality by removing or altering stream flows or adding pollutants. Many miles of streams in the Rogue basin are designated as water quality impaired for multiple parameters including temperature, bacteria, nutrients, algae, sediment, and more. Under current law, the state can approve water rights transfers and similar changes to existing water rights without considering impacts to streamflows and the fish and water quality they support. This loophole needs to be closed. Oregon can no longer afford the loss of in-stream habitat for sensitive, threatened or endangered aquatic species. Rogue basin streams are all over-appropriated and many diversions contribute to water quality impairment in water quality limited streams. Current water law needs to be updated to reflect the impacts of diversions to water quality and other water users.

Much of the Rogue basin supports native and threatened fish as well as supplying municipal, domestic, and agricultural water users. Under the Clean Water Act, Oregon has an obligation to protect and improve impaired water quality. This bill will support water quality improvement in the Rogue basin and the state overall and benefit waterways, native fish, recreation, and water quality for all of us. KS Wild strongly urges the committee to support SB 1153. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Frances Oyung
Program Manager
Rogue Riverkeeper