

Testimony to the  
**Oregon Legislature**  
**Joint Committee on Transportation in Support of HB 2184**

April 1, 2025

Good day Co-Chair Gorsek, Co-Chair McLain, Co-Vice Chair Starr, Co-Vice Chair Boshart Davis and members of the Joint Committee on Transportation.

For the record, my name is Herbert Fricke/President of Akana (a local Native American owned architectural/engineering consulting firm – I am a member of the Three Affiliated Tribes, Fort Berthold, ND).

I am writing today to strongly support House Bill 2184.

Though I am not a member of one of the Columbia River Treaty Tribes (Warm Springs Tribes (OR), Umatilla Tribe (OR), Yakama Nation (WA), and the Nez Perce Tribe (ID), I have been a resident of Oregon since the early 90's and have become part of the Native American community in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. I have fished alongside tribal fishers, helped design fishing access sites, and served tribal business (NW Native Chamber, Warm Springs EDC board member).

The Columbia River Treaty Tribes and indigenous people care deeply about our land and communities and have significant cultural ties to the Columbia River, especially near Hood River, OR, where they have harvested fish since time immemorial, not only for religious and cultural purposes, but commercial as well. It is their livelihood, which is why they support and invest in our region and its improvements, working to create economic, safety and housing opportunities for our members, families, and neighbors – not just for Oregonians, but our Washingtonian neighbors, as well. The Hood River White Salmon Bridge Replacement project will increase the preservation of a vital transportation conduit between the two states. This improved artery will address several necessary improvements to increase safety and multi-modal transportation access for the surrounding communities. Objectives of this project aimed squarely at improving transportation of the bridgeway area include:

1. Improve traffic operations for current and future cross-river traffic and at connections to I-84 and SR 14;
2. Improve vehicle and freight travel safety by reducing real and perceived hazards;
3. Improve river navigation for vessels passing under the bridge;
4. Improve the river crossing's seismic resiliency;
5. Maintain and improve a transportation link between the White Salmon, Bingen, and Hood River communities, businesses and services;
6. Provide a cross-river connection for bicyclists and pedestrians; and
7. Fulfill the legislative directives tied to the Project funding.

This project is also of great importance to the Treaty tribes, specifically tribal fisherman, tribal members, and tribal family members who frequently use the bridge, for work, to access their fishing sites, or transport their catch to market. This project encourages the practice and preservation of their shared tribal traditions and heritage.

We respectfully ask this committee to support HB 2184. Passing this bill would eliminate bridge hazards that currently exist, increase usage of the bridge, and improve a vital, cross-river transportation link. The benefits of this crucial Hood River White Salmon Bridge Replacement project would be lasting and affect this generation and those to come.

We appreciate your service, and we are happy to be a resource if you have additional questions.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Herb Fricke, PE

President/CEO

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