

Submitter: Sarah Chaney  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1153

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

I support Senate Bill 1153 to safeguard fish habitat and water quality in water transfers.

In Oregon, the water in our streams and rivers is our most important resource. For too long, an outdated loophole has allowed the Oregon Water Resources Department to approve applications for water right transfers without adequate consideration of whether the change will harm streamflows. Because of this loophole, instream habitat is threatened or endangered in many streams in our state. Senate Bill 1153 helps to safeguard our streams — and the fish, wildlife, and water quality values they support — by ensuring a narrow subset of proposed water right changes won't further diminish flows in unprotected streams. For non-municipal users, this will help guard against harm for most proposed upstream stream diversion changes or movement of groundwater wells within a quarter mile of streams.

This bill also enhances existing processes for tribal consultation with a goal of identifying and addressing potential impacts to tribal interests in water. I urge your support of SB 1153 and the life-sustaining streamflows it will safeguard. Thank you,

Sarah Chaney