

Submitter: Daniel Rohlf
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2977

My name is Daniel Rohlf. I'm on the environmental law faculty at Lewis and Clark Law School in Portland, and I currently serve as chair of the board of Bird Conservation Oregon, an organization founded by Bob Sallinger.

My background gives me two reasons to enthusiastically support this bill.

First, over the decades I have taught my Wildlife Law course at Lewis and Clark, I have had to help students understand that the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, like most state fish and wildlife agencies throughout the country, has very little money to spend on managing and protecting non-game fish and wildlife throughout the state, even including species that are declining or even facing extinction. It always comes as a surprise to students that the state agency dedicated to managing and protecting Oregon's amazing biodiversity has very little capacity to benefit the vast majority of species in the state, and that Oregon's Wildlife Action Plan mostly just occupies shelf space. This bill would change this status quo dramatically, finally funding not only the Action Plan but crucial additional measure such as invasive species control, human-wildlife conflict minimization efforts, and protecting and restoring wildlife migration corridors. My Wildlife Law course would be a lot more fun to teach next spring!

For a class 30 years ago, I asked Bob Sallinger to lead a field trip to watch peregrine falcons on a city bridge. Since then, I had Bob as a student at the law school, co-taught classes with him, lobbied people like you with him, and served on boards that facilitated – and cheered on – his work. Over the decades I knew him, Bob – as I'm sure most of you know – was always looking for a way to provide the resources necessary for the state to better manage and protect birds and all species throughout Oregon. And after a day working to protect the surprising number of species that depend on habitat in our urban areas, Bob would hop in his Volkswagen bus and drive all night to attend in person a meeting in southeastern Oregon to work directly with local people. Bird Conservation Oregon just sponsored showing of a film about collaborative efforts between ranchers and bird lovers in Harney County, and this bill would help fund such measures that will benefit all Oregonians and all Oregon fish and wildlife.

Just like Bob Sallinger's statewide conservation and collaboration legacy, this bill would have numerous and lasting state-wide benefits -- from restored urban salmon spawning habitat in SE Portland to cooperative conservation in the wetlands and high desert of Harney County and the Klamath country. Somewhere Bob, of course, would

love it.

For these reasons, I urge you to grasp this historic opportunity to benefit both the people and biodiversity of Oregon.