

Submitter: Daniel Edwards
On Behalf Of: Myself
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

I have lived in Oregon since September of 1974. I have greatly enjoyed Oregon's outdoors since moving here. I am an avid outdoor person and enjoy river rafting, bicycling, hunting, fishing, bird watching, hiking and camping to name some of my outdoor interests. All of these activities either involve fish and wildlife species directly or are greatly enhanced by wild animals. The mission of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife: "To protect and enhance Oregon's fish and wildlife and their habitats for use and enjoyment by present and future generations" encompasses all wild animals and their habitats along with human enjoyment. Traditionally, funding for fish, wildlife, stewardship in Oregon and habitat management on state wildlife areas has come from license and tag sales augmented by Federal funding that varies year to year. Thus, a stable funding source to supplement funds generated from traditional source has long been needed.

Need for a dedicated funding source to provide additional funding, particularly for species that aren't hunted or fished, is exemplified by the Oregon's Statewide Action Plan (SWAP), which identifies over 300 species of the greatest conservation need. Federal funding for this endeavor has declined and is uncertain in the future. HB 4134 would provide a dedicated funding source to aid with management of these most at-risk species identified.

Investing now, through support of HB 4134 will help secure healthy animal populations and their required environments for future generation of Oregonian and visitors alike. Additional funding now is a sound formula as maintenance is less expensive than recovery efforts down the line. HB 4134, also is designed to help in the struggle against poaching and to reduce risks to habitat due wildfire through habitat management.

Finally, Oregon's outdoor recreation industry is a great boon to the state's over all economy. Yes, HB 4134 would increase the state lodging tax by 1.25% from 1.5% to 2.75% but at that rate Oregon's lodging tax would still remain among the lowest in the nation. Thus, I believe that HB 4134 would be of great benefit to outdoor recreation with little negative impact on tourism.

Thus, I strongly support HB 4134, I hope that you share my enthusiasm for this funding opportunity, which will greatly benefit to Oregon's fish, wildlife and their environments. I strongly encourage you to use your esteemed positions to support HB 4134.

