



Oregon Council Trout Unlimited

Feb. 2, 2016

Trout Unlimited testimony in opposition to SB 1517

Chair Edwards and Committee members-

My name is Tom Wolf, Executive Director of the Oregon Council Trout Unlimited, here representing the 3200 members of Trout Unlimited here in Oregon. These members volunteer thousands of hour to work doing restoration in watersheds across this great state. We believe that the restoration efforts of all our volunteers, who are dedicated individuals of different political beliefs, either liberal or conservative, would be harmed by the passage of SB 1517. Therefore, I am here today to vigorously oppose this bill.

We have two major concerns about the bill that we want to share. 1. The language of SB 1517 would make wetlands restoration subject to county approval and review. This would raise the cost of restoration projects and extend project completion by the time taken in county review. A hostile county could stop all restoration projects in their domain. 2. Increases from 50 cubic feet to 100 cubic feet the amount of fill that can be removed from waters of the state without permit. This is a huge increase and would have major negative impacts on riparian and wetland habitat.

Another issue is of course the landowner and participate liability, which appears to be addressed by amendments which TU supports. Making landowners or participants liable in wetland and habitat projects will reduce, maybe drastically, the number of landowners and groups involved in needed restoration projects. This would negatively impact the restoration of key salmonid habitat.

Trout Unlimited has a history of working with private landowners to do key restoration, providing funding, volunteers and project planning. SB 1517 would severely impact the work that Trout Unlimited and many other group would do in restoration. We ask that the committee vote " NO" on SB 1517- for fish, fishermen and all Oregonians.

Tom Wolf,

Executive Director

Oregon Council Trout Unlimited