



## OREGON CHAPTER SIERRA CLUB

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To: Members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

From: Rhett Lawrence, Oregon Chapter Sierra Club

Date: April 11, 2017

RE: House Bill 3228

Chair Clem and Members of the Committee: On behalf of the more than 20,000 members and supporters of the Sierra Club in Oregon, I am pleased to offer some written testimony in support of House Bill 3228. Thank you for considering my comments.

ORS 496.012 provides the primary direction to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) for its programs and activities. At the core of the policy is the directive to the agency "to prevent the serious depletion of any indigenous species." Serious depletion is defined in OAR 635-007-0501-(56) as "a significant likelihood that the species management unit will become threatened or endangered." This definition means that wildlife must be managed in ways that preclude the likelihood that they will become listed under either the state or federal Endangered Species Acts.

There has been debate for years about whether state wildlife policy requires the agency to balance protection and utilization of native species. But HB 3228 makes it clear that preventing serious depletion is the agency's overriding obligation. We believe that this is the proper course of action and that the policy statement included in the bill is crucial to our state's native species.

For these reasons, the Oregon Chapter of the Sierra Club is strongly supportive of House Bill 3228 and we urge this committee to support it as well. Thank you very much for considering my comments and please let me know if I can be of further assistance to the Committee.