



April 11, 2017

Subject: Testimony to The House Committee on Agriculture and Natural resources

RE: HB 3228 Relating to Non-game Wildlife Management

Chair Brian Clem and members of the Committee

My name is David Wiley. I am representing the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF).

RMEF is a national non-profit wildlife conservation organization whose mission is to ensure the future of elk, all other wildlife, their habitat and our hunting heritage. RMEF has more than 16,000 members in Oregon and 220,000 nationwide. In Oregon, over the years, RMEF and its partners have enhanced and protected more than 787,000 acres of wildlife habit.

HB 3228 proposes amendment of ORS 496.012 Wildlife Policy by adding “(7) To protect, maintain and restore indigenous nongame wildlife resources for their intrinsic values, ecosystem functions and long term benefits.”

The RMEF will not support HB 3228 for two reasons:

1. HB 3228 as proposed is redundant in that ORS 496.012 (1) – Wildlife Policy states “(1) To maintain all species of wildlife at optimum levels.” The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) are provided more than adequate direction by the current law to protect, manage and restore non-game wildlife. In fact ODFW’s has restored species to the landscape and are continuing to do so. For example ODFW restored the Bighorn sheep, the wolf, the cougar, and has programs on-going to restore the Oregon spotted frog, the western pond turtle, the Kit Fox, several salmon species and the Bull Trout, to name a few species. ODFW has of its own choice a document codified in Oregon Administrative Rule titled The Oregon Conservation strategy which focuses attention upon and provides guidance regarding non-game species management and habitat protection and restoration. It is very important to understand there are many combinations ecological and biological reasons a species may have gone away and it just may not be reasonably possible to restore. The decision to restore a species should be left to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission and wildlife management professionals in ODFW.
2. RMEF is concerned that should HB 3228 become law and focus the spotlight on non-game species it will detract from ODFW’s mandate under the law “To maintain all species of wildlife at optimum levels.” You are all aware of the report of Legislative Task Force on ODFW Funding which identified the size of



the unfunded mandate which currently exists. It is the Sportsmen and Sportswomen of Oregon who fund wildlife and fisheries management by buying fishing and hunting licenses and tags. RMEF believes there is great potential, if HB 3228 becomes law, to very adversely impact management of all the other wildlife of the state to an unacceptable degree.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our testimony.

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