

 **Sharp Ranches, LLC**  
**P.O. Box 85, 71965 Prather Creek Rd.**  
**Burns, Oregon 97720**  
541-589-3317  
e-mail: [SharpRanches@aol.com](mailto:SharpRanches@aol.com)

February 5, 2020

RE: Support for SB 1511 (submitted via [senr.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:senr.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov))

Dear Chairman Dembrow and Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

I write in support of SB 1511 enabling ODFW to adopt by rule and administer program authorizing voluntary stream restoration and habitat improvement projects through construction of environmental restoration weirs.

As an eastern Oregon rancher, I have witnessed first-hand at Silvies Valley Ranch the habitat restoration benefits as provided by weirs and artificial beaver dams which have enabled the conversion of degraded dryland sagebrush and juniper encroached rangelands back to natural riparian and wetland meadow ecosystems critical for supporting the healthy habitat needs of a variety of wildlife species (birds, native fish, and various small and large mammals). SB 1511's authority provides important conservation actions for mitigating land erosion, riparian degradation, floodplain restoration, carbon sequestration, and for developing needed fire breaks.

In my home of Harney County our ranching and agricultural community has a demonstrated history of working collaboratively with state departments and federal agencies on a variety of environmental, habitat recovery and enhancement, and species protection initiatives ranging from Greater Sage-Grouse CCAA conservation agreements, Wildland Fire Protection, Great Basin Water Collaborative, and Malheur Lake Red Band Trout protection. SB 1511 provides important new conservation action capabilities benefiting all of these efforts important to Harney County and other eastern Oregon counties.

On behalf of Oregon ranchers and our agricultural communities of eastern Oregon, I urge the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources support of SB 1511.

Sincerely,



Tom Sharp, Harney County Rancher  
Chair, Harney County Sage-Grouse CCAA Steering Committee  
President, Oregon Cattlemen's Association