



July 25, 2017

Re: TU Supports S.1548, the Oregon Wildlands Act.

Dear Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Wyden, and members of the Subcommittee:

Trout Unlimited strongly supports S.1548, the Oregon Wildlands Act. This bill seeks to add additional protections to a variety of public lands in Oregon that are very important to TU members, as well as the citizens of Oregon.

Trout Unlimited's mission is to conserve, protect, restore and reconnect North America's trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds. National forests provide crucial habitat for trout, salmon and steelhead, and some of the best fishing in the country. S. 1548 will provide important permanent protections that are desperately needed to sustain quality fisheries on our national forests in Oregon, by allocating certain tracts held by the BLM to create national recreation areas and additional wild and scenic river designations in Oregon.

One particular area that would benefit from this bill is the Rogue River, known for some of the very best salmon and steelhead fishing in the lower 48. Amazing runs of summer and winter steelhead, strong runs of fall and spring chinook, and ESA-listed coho salmon keep anglers coming to towns like Gold Beach, Agnes, and Grants Pass, Oregon year-around.

The economic benefit of a healthy fishery for these southwest Oregon towns and cash-strapped counties cannot be overstated. Thousands of anglers from all over the country visit the region and spend tens of thousands of dollars at local hotels, restaurants, gas stations, grocery stores and tackle shops. Long-term protections of this valuable economic engine is crucial. This bill would provide benefit to many of Oregon's great wild lands and the people, fish and wildlife that depend upon them

For questions related to these comments, please contact the following:

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