

## Community Restoration Network

MEASURE: SB 1511  
EXHIBIT: 35  
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SUBMITTED BY: Community Restoration Network

February 2, 2012

To: Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
Fr: Community Restoration Network  
Re: Testimony in support of SB 1511

Community Restoration Network is a mitigation and conservation banking company. A mitigation bank replaces disturbed or destroyed habitat through the restoration, creation or enhancement of like habitat. A conservation bank is created to protect land that contains endangered, threatened, or at-risk species.

We support SB 1511 because it would endorse in statute the use of mitigation banking (e.g., ecosystem marketplace credits) to meet the requirements of compensatory mitigation and encourage greater use of such credits by state agencies.

State and federal regulators have come to regard mitigation banking as an acceptable and often preferred method of providing for mitigation because: 1) mitigation banks operate with larger scale acreages which provides better, more sustainable habitat; and 2) banks are accredited by the regulatory agencies and are responsible for long-term maintenance and monitoring of their projects to ensure they comply with the terms of their permits.

For developers and government entities that need mitigation, the ability to purchase mitigation from accredited mitigation banks: 1) relieves them of the burden of having to create their own mitigation projects which are frequently small, isolated acreages that by their nature are difficult to sustain; 2) eliminates schedule delays created by the inability to perform their own on-site mitigation; and 3) costs less because they are not forced to waste money performing on-site mitigation that doesn't work.

Mitigation banking and ecosystem marketplaces are a market response to the needs of developers (and government entities) that need meaningful mitigation to meet their compensatory requirements in a timely and cost-effective manner. This concept provides measureable habitat benefits because mitigation banks work on larger scales (so they can acquire and preserve larger tracts of sensitive habitat) and they must complete a rigorous permitting process which ensures their credits are approved by state and/or federal regulating agencies.

Any action the Oregon Legislature can take – such as through the passage of SB 1511 or similar legislation – is commendable for supporting a process that removes what can be an expensive delay point for developers and government agencies while increasing the preservation and maintenance of important habitat.