

January 25, 2012

Members of the Oregon Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Honored Oregon Legislators:

As a businessman involved in both urban and rural arenas, I am writing to urge your support for HB 4126 and SB 1511.

Our company, Wildwood-Mahonia, is located in the Salem area. We own over 1,000 acres of Willamette Valley farmland and operate a sustainable vineyard and nursery operation. Also, we have been doing sustainable urban design and development for over 30 years with projects including residential, commercial, food processing and Oregon's largest biodiesel plant. We have been deeply involved in restoration projects throughout the Basin and beyond in such places as China and Peru. Our experience on both sides of Urban Growth Boundaries makes us strongly believe that it is not only possible, but essential to consider the full spectrum of ecological and social values while providing employment and tangible benefits for society. As a member of the Willamette Partnership Board, Oregon Sustainability Board and ad hoc committee advising the SB 513 work group, I have gained considerable knowledge and experience in assessing the value of a variety of ecosystem services as well as finding ways to address these values in the context of doing business.

SB 1511 and HB 4126 continue the policy development that began in 2009 with the passage of SB 513, and provides more explicit direction to state agencies and local governments to incorporate ecosystem service considerations in routine decisions about land use and management. It also encourages agencies to use market-based approaches to conservation where appropriate. It emphasizes the importance of improved integration across agencies, efficiency, and should improve overall ecological effectiveness. Properly implemented, this bill will streamline permitting for businesses, and help farmers and forest landowners diversify their revenue streams. It is carefully crafted to provide direction to agencies about how to accomplish goals more efficiently, without adverse fiscal impacts, and to improve accountability overall.

Oregon is the first state in the nation to adopt comprehensive policy regarding ecosystem services and markets. Passage of SB 1511 and HB 4126 will continue and enhance the state's reputation as a clear leader in this arena.

Thanks for your support,

John D. Miller

John Miller, President
Wildwood/Mahonia