



MEASURE: SB 1511
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SUBMITTED BY: Martin Goebel

January 27, 2012

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Members of the Oregon Legislature
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE, #453
Salem, Oregon 97310

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for considering SB 1511 and HB 4126. Sustainable Northwest supports these bills and encourages you to adopt the legislation without any amendments.

Sustainable Northwest is a non-profit organization working with diverse interests to help sustain rural communities by assisting them in diversifying their economies.

SB 1511 and HB 4126 continue efforts underway for several years in Oregon to build a policy framework that encourages programs with potential to provide revenue to farmers and forest landowners, and to help support a growing restoration workforce to deliver ecosystem services.

We see many opportunities for rural landowners to access ecosystem service programs and markets. Some are created through existing regulations, such as wetland banking and water quality trading. Others are voluntary, like the sale of carbon credits to utilities and other entities seeking to reduce their carbon footprints. There are also opportunities to access a variety of programs that provide payments for ecosystem services, like federal Farm Bill programs.

SB 1511 and HB 4126 address many of the challenges inherent in these new programs including lack of consistent measurements for ecosystem services, lack of integration across agencies and programs, and high transaction costs associated with the creation, verification, and sale of credits.

This bill encourages, but does not require agencies to be innovative, try new approaches, improve effectiveness and save money by finding solutions to the state's infrastructure needs by looking first at opportunities to restore the functioning of natural systems before considering expensive engineering solutions.

Sincerely,

Martin Goebel
President