

Testimony by Dr. Veronica Newton Hudson of Bend Oregon for The Joint Committee on Ways  
and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources

Re: ODA Budget Submission 2013-15 and proposed elimination of all State-funded conservation  
of Oregon's Native Plants (Policy Package 330)

February 28, 2013

The Committee on Ways & Means

Subcommittee on Natural Resources

Re: Elimination of All State Funding for Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Native  
Plants in Oregon

Co-Chairs and Members of the Ways & Means Committee

For the record, I am Dr. Veronica Newton Hudson, I moved to Bend, Oregon from the East Coast  
five years ago. Our home is situated close to the eastern slopes of the Three Sisters mountains  
and since moving here we have become involved in the recent creation of a grass-roots  
organization 'The Friends of the Tumalo Wildlife Corridor' which seeks to help protect an  
important local ecosystem and critical wildlife refuge.

It is essential to maintain the biodiversity of our native plant communities as they are an  
important foundation of all our natural ecosystems.

In this context I was very disappointed to learn that the Oregon Department of Agriculture is,  
according to Policy Package 330 (ODA 2013-15 Budget Submission) subject to Legislative  
Agreement, planning to cancel its programs to conserve threatened and endangered plants –  
thus - "all State-supported conservation work on Oregon's threatened and endangered native  
plant species will cease."

Cancelation of all State funding for the inexpensive but important Threatened and Endangered  
Native Plants Program, by the Department of Agriculture, would deliver a message implying  
that "ODA has no real interest in native plant conservation and does not actively support the  
efforts of Oregon's Citizens to Keep Oregon Green."

ODA has stated that it hopes to secure competitive financial grants to maintain a *barebones*  
conservation program. External grant-awarding foundations have many calls on their funds and  
so they invariably look very closely at matching funds as they make their funding decisions. The  
absence of State Funds for a State Program in a State Agency would be viewed as evidence that

“Oregon is not prepared to support its own legislative mandate for native plant conservation.” Oregon’s competitiveness for external funds in this area would be critically damaged and indeed might, through ODA’s legal structure, impact the State’s ability to receive Section 6 funds for plant conservation under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

I wish to record my strong opposition to the proposal by the Oregon Department of Agriculture (Policy Package 330 in ODA Budget Submission for 2013-15) to cut all State funding for work to conserve Oregon’s threatened and endangered native plant species. The intention to replace these monies by external grant funding seems unrealistic.

As a concerned Oregon Citizen, I ask that you act to preserve this modest but critical State program through the provision of sufficient funds. It is vitally important to all Oregon’s natural ecosystems to maintain plant diversity: loss of any plant species threatens stability in an ecosystem and thus all our natural environment.

Sincerely,

Dr. Veronica Newton Hudson

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