



226 South Main Street, Suite L • Independence, OR 97351 • (503) 837-0237 • info@luckiamuteLWC.org

March 11, 2013

Re: Written testimony in support of OWEB's programs

Dear Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources;

The Luckiamute Watershed Council has been awarded several OWEB grants and used this funding to benefit the local communities of Polk and Benton Counties. In four of our sub-basin priority areas, OWEB funding has leveraged funding from private foundations (predominately the Meyer Memorial Trust) to engage over 85% of streamside landowners to control an invading noxious weed species and begin revegetation with native species. This work benefits the landowners' ability to access streams and rivers, improves property value, and enhances habitat for native fish and wildlife. Based on the success and value of this work, OWEB has recently awarded the LWC additional funding to expand this work, and we have continued to engage additional landowners moving down the river. In other projects, the LWC has collaborated with private timber and other private landowners to remove passage barriers for migrating steelhead.

Additionally, OWEB funds have supported work at the Luckiamute State Natural Area (LSNA) – 925 acres of public lands managed by Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD). In a strong and productive partnership, the LWC and OPRD have used OWEB and other funds to control invasive species and revegetate valuable floodplain forest and riparian area for habitat and recreation. The LSNA is located at the confluence of the Luckiamute and Willamette Rivers and has been identified by several conservation organizations as an important area to protect and restore because of its range of habitat types, diversity of species, including many state and federally protected birds, and the opportunity to share this work with the public – a smart investment in terms of return on investment for habitat and public benefit.

Watershed councils and other organizations competing for OWEB funds are the local, grassroots, "boots-in-the mud" groups that make the Oregon Plan a reality for the benefit of native species – valued economically, culturally, and aesthetically – and for Oregonians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kristen M. Larson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kristen M. Larson
Council Coordinator