

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action: Do Pass

Vote: 9 - 0 - 0

Yeas: Clem, Esquivel, Krieger, McKeown, Reardon, Thompson, Unger, Whitsett, Witt

Nays: 0

Exc.: 0

Prepared By: Beth Patrino, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 2/19

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Repeals statutes regarding Gorse Control Account; directs remaining funds to General Fund. Repeals statute requiring use of agricultural experiment stations to eradicate algae and detrimental weeds and grasses from waters. Repeals statute requiring posting of cleaning requirements on certain agricultural machinery in weed control districts. Authorizes imposition of civil penalty not exceeding \$10,000 for violation of weed control statutes.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- 2009 consolidation of weed laws did not include civil penalty authority in ORS Chapter 569
- Gorse control efforts

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) is a noxious weed that is established on the southern Oregon coast. Gorse outcompetes native vegetation, reducing native plant diversity and degrading wildlife habitat. Gorse foliage is highly flammable and dense stands pose a significant fire hazard as dead foliage collects within and at the base of the plant.

State law originally directed money for gorse control to the state agricultural experiment stations. Today, the Oregon Department of Agriculture coordinates with county weed programs and local agencies to control gorse. Control of aquatic weeds, also originally addressed by the agricultural experiment stations, is now managed by Portland State University. Finally, ORS 569.445-450 requires a notice regarding cleaning of machinery to be posted on farm equipment; county clerks are directed to provide copies of such notices for posting. House Bill 2247 would repeal statutes that are no longer used and authorize a civil penalty for a violation of weed control laws.