



**Save Helvetia.org**

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*Advancing policies, leaders and actions  
that protect Helvetia's  
treasured resources*

February 2, 2015

Honorable Brian Clem  
Chairman, Land Use Committee  
Oregon State House of Representatives H-284  
900 Court St, NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Save Helvetia's Agricultural Perspective on Land Use

Honorable Representative Clem and Members of the House Land Use Committee,

## **Agricultural Perspectives on Land Use Oregon Legislative Assembly 2015**

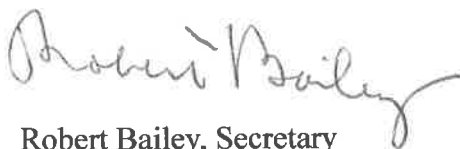
Through a multi-year effort and at much personal expense of time and money, several organizations and individuals challenged Washington County's (Metro's, DLCD, LCDC) **urban and rural reserves**. The State Court of Appeals found that Washington County had strayed from the Oregon Administrative Rules in their making of reserves selections. This was considered so substantial that the entire plan was thrown out. Through the Grand Bargain, a new plan was fleshed out which protected many more acres of farm lands, redressing some of the concerns of those that appealed. The process however lacked public involvement, lacked analysis of lands traded in for urban reserves, and map errors were made in the hurried process.

Now, a year after the Grand Bargain, Washington County is readying its legislative agendas. The primary upcoming agenda is **Transportation**. While transportation is vital for all, let us recall that "goods to market" advocacy came from the agricultural sector first. Now, the call is for "freight to ports". It is likely that agricultural perspectives will be left out as corporations, cities, Metro, the counties, the Port of Portland, and the state clamor to diminish congestion through a massive investment in transportation projects.

We look to key legislators to make certain that rural reserve farmlands are not taken or damaged under the guise of transportation improvement projects. This protection can happen through negotiation, testimony and legislative amendment.

- Through the Urban and Rural Reserves process, we witnessed and then verified multiple violations to the spirit and content of SB 100's Goal One, Citizen Involvement in Land Use. While citizens are continuously persuaded to believe they have participation "rights", "right violations" ended up having no substance nor any enforcement. SB 100's Goal One Citizen Involvement should be given substance through the development of Oregon Administrative Rules. This should be amended into an appropriate land use bill before the 2015 legislature.
- Much of what we will hear of the emergency need for transportation projects should have been heard in and during the Reserves Process, when all of the future land use needs were to have been put "on the table". As it turns out, we got a piece then, and we will get another piece, now. This magic show should not be rewarded with more farm land.
- The boundary for urban reserve at the junction of NW Helvetia Road and to the west along N.W. Groveland Drive should be moved to the southern edge of Highway 26. This was an unanticipated error in the Grand Bargain that now the county declines to correct it. As Metro moves to make map error corrections, please include this map error correction.
- Road expansion projects should not take rural reserve farmland whenever possible. Expansions should come out of the urban reserve side of roads first. This should be amended into any transportation funding legislation.
- Subsequent UGB expansions should only go to the centerline of rural roads, not to the rural reserve farm side. This will help protect the integrity of the farmland, agricultural drainage systems, and access to the fields. This protection should be amended into any Transportation funding legislation.
- The creation of buffers has been long talked about but rarely practiced. Buffers should be put into practice by amendment to transportation funding legislation. Along the "edge" between urban and rural reserve, substantial effort should be undertaken to mitigate impacts negative to farming practices: drainage; field tiling; hard edges; street lighting; obstacles to field access; preventing the routing of heavy urban commute traffic from the rural edge, heavy commute routing.
- Rural bike lanes should not take rural reserve farmland. Where rural bike lanes are contemplated, they should first come out of the urban reserve side of the road. This should be amended into transportation funding legislation.
- Rural road ditches act to shunt excess water from farm fields. Road expansion projects should require an explicit analysis of impact to farmland drainage and no net loss should occur. This should be amended into Transportation funding legislation.
- Turning goods to market rural roads into corporate freight-ways might be destructive of the pre-existing economic agricultural sector.

Respectfully,



Robert Bailey, Secretary  
Save Helvetia

[www.savehelvetia.org](http://www.savehelvetia.org)

cc: Rep. Joe Gallegos, Rep. Susan McClain,  
Sen. Chuck Riley