



February 19, 2015

Senator Richard Devlin, Co-Chair  
Representative Dan Rayfield, Co-Chair  
Joint Ways & Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources  
900 Court St NE Room H-178  
Salem, OR 97301

Cc: Katy Coba, ODA Director

RE: ODA Noxious Weed Program Budget Support

Dear Senator Devlin,

The West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District (WMSWCD) is writing in strong support of the ODA Noxious Weed Program. The Conservation District is pleased to hear that this program is not facing any major cuts this session.

The WMSWCD urges all considering this program to focus on the critical role it plays in regards to Oregon's natural resources, human health and the economy. Stable funding for noxious weed programs is critical at state and county levels to be effective.

The state's programs and support are crucially important to our District. Portland is where many invasive species are initially released and spread due to Portland's position as a crossroads/port for travelers and cargo; it's relatively large population and active garden and hiking communities which all can serve as vectors for invasive weeds. Even a one year lapse in the program would result in millions of invasive plant seeds being dispersed, undoing the efforts of previous years' management and forming a major epicenter for weed dispersal across the region. Years of work and millions of dollars invested in this effort will be sacrificed if this program is not maintained. The West Multnomah SWCD invests substantial resources in invasive species management, but these would be in vain should the state's Noxious Weed Programs lose the ability to conduct its statewide programs.

The health of native vegetation and wildlife continue to prove even more critical and at risk with population growth and climate change on the horizon – if invasives are allowed to flourish in Oregon the state's natural heritage is at great risk for future generations.

Thoughtful consideration and continued funding of this and other noxious weed programs is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and efforts.

Sincerely,

  
Dick Springer, District Manager

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