

February 23, 2015

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

Dear Sir:


As Chairman of The Upper Burnt River Weed Control District I am writing in support of funding for the ODA Noxious Weed Program. Our District is a local one in a very rural area of Eastern Oregon in Baker County. Our mission is to work toward weed control efforts to protect our agricultural economy, promote better use of our natural resources and enhance pride in our small community.

With the loss of the timber industry here, and restricted regulations on mining, agriculture, primarily cattle ranching, is all that keeps our community going. For example, our school population has dropped from approximately 185 students several years ago to only 27 today with 10 of those being foreign exchange students. So as you can see it is essential we do all we can to keep our agricultural economy well and control of noxious weed invasion is vital to that end. We feel that prevention is especially important because once a bad weed becomes an invasion it is extremely hard to control.

One of the goals in our Strategic Plan is to promote weed control using chemical and biological means by providing financial assistance to land owners through a cost share program. Although we receive a small amount of money to meet that goal through landowner donations and the County Weed District, our primary source of funding comes from the grant application process. Without Grant money we would not be able to provide the incentive so critical to making weed control in our area affordable.

I believe that not only can noxious weed control projects protect our agricultural economy, but also our natural resources, including sensitive species and our water quality and quantity. Therefore we urge you to continue support for stable funding for noxious weed programs at all levels, State, County, and local.

Sincerely,



Sam (Coke) Ramos, Chairman  
Upper Burnt River Weed Control District

cc: Katy Coba, ODA Director

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