



PACIFIC FOREST TRUST

Private Forests. Public Treasures.

Joint Committee On Ways and Means SubCommittee On Natural Resources
Via email: jwmnr.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

March 29, 2017

RE: Support HB 5040

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and Witt and Committee Members,

We urge you to support HB 5040, which funds the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) at \$117.8 million for fiscal years 2017-2019. OWEB protects and restores watersheds, supports rural communities, and improves wildlife habitat. Its programs support watershed restoration and conservation of natural and working lands through partnerships with landowners, communities, and other partners.

OWEB programs provide jobs and help support rural communities. Research conducted in 2010 found that every \$1 million invested by OWEB in forest and watershed restoration supported an average of 16.7 jobs *in Oregon*.ⁱ Based on this research, the level of support for OWEB in 2017-2019 would support nearly 1,000 jobs each year, many of these in rural areas. Beyond these direct impacts, even more jobs will be supported as every dollar OWEB invests is typically matched by an additional \$1.48 invested by private landowners, philanthropies, and others.ⁱⁱ

Pacific Forest Trust has direct experience working with OWEB on watershed projects that protect and enhance wildlife habitat, support rural communities, and secure water supplies. The Mountcrest Working Forest conservation projectⁱⁱⁱ, supported in part by \$957,700 of OWEB funding, will protect over 2,000 acres that include beautiful mixed age working forests, a wet meadow that provides a natural reservoir, and a section of the Pacific Crest Trail enjoyed by hikers from near and far. This OWEB funding has been leveraged with funding from many other partners, including \$1 million from USFWS^{iv} to help protect the endangered species that call Mountcrest home, such as the northern spotted owl and Pacific fisher.

Having seen the tremendous impact of OWEB funding firsthand and understanding its larger benefits for the environment, rural communities, and the Oregon economy, we encourage you to support HB 5040.

Sincerely,

Laurie Wayburn
President

ⁱ Nielsen-Pincus, Max and Moseley, Cassandra. 2010. Economic and Employment Impacts of Forest and Watershed Restoration in Oregon. *Ecosystem Workforce Program, Working Paper Number 24*. University of Oregon.

ⁱⁱ Nielsen-Pincus, Max and Moseley, Cassandra. 2010. Economic and Employment Impacts of Forest and Watershed Restoration in Oregon. *Ecosystem Workforce Program, Working Paper Number 24*. University of Oregon.

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.pacificforest.org/conservation-project/mountcrest/>

^{iv} <https://www.pacificforest.org/press-release-usfws-grant-protects-threatened-species/>