

April 13, 2017



**Testimony in Support of OSU's Budget Ask and Extension Services**

Chairs Monroe and Smith Warner and members of the Committee,

Located between John Day and Burns, Silvies Valley Ranch is a working commercial ranch that starting in July will also offer recreation and lodging while providing over 80 jobs. The ranch consists of approximately 140,000 acres of leased and private land. Aside from raising grass fed and finished organic beef cattle and goats and premium organic hay, the ranch is highly focused on reconstruction ecology and has many riparian and wildlife habitat restoration projects in various stages of completion. In addition to its commitment to advanced sustainable agricultural practices, the ranch and its accompanying resort are emerging as key economic development drivers in Eastern Oregon, particularly for Grant and Harney counties.

Oregon State University (OSU) is an important partner for Silvies Valley Ranch. As the ranch's owners, my wife, Sandy, and I and our two sons, Tygh and Rand, are all OSU graduates who support the mission of the university and work regularly with OSU faculty, undergraduate interns, and graduate students to collaborate on significant projects related to agriculture, forestry, geology, hydromorphology and biological restoration, eco-tourism, and diversity. Beyond those working on our ranch, many jobs critical to Eastern Oregon's economy are held by OSU grads or current students; at times partnering with the university, the Oregon State-Cascades campus, or extension services.

For instance, several OSU students and researchers continue to help us understand how to naturally inundate meadowlands to pre-historic flood levels. These types of projects allow for better water conservation, recharging of groundwater, and facilitate the eradication of invasive plant species allowing for the return of native plants and animals. This helps our operations, but the experimental nature of our work also allows OSU to use those findings and replicate successful findings and practices.

Our ranch (and much of Eastern Oregon's economy) relies the same way on the ideas and the people connected to Oregon State University. It is in that vein that we support two funding requests critical to the future of Oregon:

First, much of Eastern Oregon works closely with the OSU Statewide Extension Services. Range science programs and advancement in ranching practices not only provide insights to our operations, but enhance agri-business practices throughout Eastern Oregon and thus promoting our local economies. We ask the committee to restore \$9.4 million for funding the Oregon Statewide Extension Services; these services touch virtually everyone in Eastern Oregon and are key to economic growth.

More generally, and more importantly, we rely on Oregon State University's people. Whether that means the research, collaboration and advice from faculty, staff and students to continue to develop cutting-edge conservation practices with us here at Silvies Valley Ranch, or allowing

4000 E Cowboy Lane  
Seneca, OR 97873  
1-800-SILVIES  
[www.silviesvalleyranch.com](http://www.silviesvalleyranch.com)

Caring for our environment, livestock, friends and families.

access for more Eastern Oregonians to attend and graduate from OSU and become productive and innovative contributors to our economy.

We are also working closely to support Oregon State University and its administration on its "Student Success Initiative." This includes four laudable goals that will reap exponential returns for Oregon's environment and economy in replicating the type of collaboration we've experience at Silvies. These goals are to raise first-year retention rates for all undergraduate students to 90 percent, raise six-year graduation rates for all undergraduate students to 70 percent, achieve higher completion rates for all groups of graduate and doctoral students, and ensure that every OSU student has at least one experiential learning opportunity (internship or study abroad experience). Private donations are already facilitating this important initiative, and we know that ensuring Oregon State University has an adequate budget will leverage the private funds already targeted at these goals.

To this end, we support providing an additional \$100 million for Oregon State University's budget. This provides necessary operating fees, helps manage tuition increases, and allows for continued, world-class research and education, and helps build Oregon's economy.

At Silvies Valley Ranch, we have seen firsthand what Oregon State University can mean for all of our state and urge your support of these requests. We are confident based on our experience that investment in Oregon State University reaps benefits in the form of better innovation, better jobs, and better environmental practices throughout Oregon.

Thank you,



Scott D. Campbell, DVM  
President & Owner