



## **Board of Commissioners**

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Commissioner Melissa Lindsay, Chair  
Commissioner Don Russell, Vice Chair  
Commissioner Jim Doherty

February 1, 2017

Members of the Oregon State Senate  
Members of the Oregon House of Representatives  
Salem, Oregon

Dear Legislators,

It has come to our attention that the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) is in the midst of making some very tough decisions regarding funding levels for State and County Noxious Weed Control Programs. The purpose of this letter is to express our support for these programs and the valuable service they provide to the natural resources of the State of Oregon.

Of greatest concern is the necessity to keep the Biological Control Program for Noxious Weeds funded. Oregon's Biological Control Program has been recognized as one of the top five programs in the world. Along with that distinction, an economic study that was done on the success of biological control for Tansy ragwort alone showed a 13:1 cost benefit ratio to the State. Furthermore, the loss of the Biological Control Program would lead to the increased reliance on pesticides to control noxious weeds in our State.

Along the same lines, Early Detection, Rapid Response weed control programs have been shown to provide a 34:1 cost benefit ratio - a return on investment that is hard to beat.

Working hand in hand with the State, the County weed programs provide valuable local control efforts on noxious weeds. At the present time though, only 23 of 36 counties have Weed Control Districts and many of those are struggling to stay afloat.

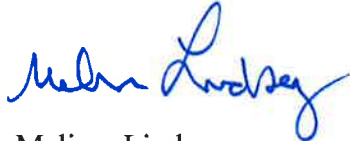
Natural Resource agency budgets combined make up less than one-percent of the State budget, while at the same, time agriculture provides for 30% of the gross product of the State. Agriculture is very important to the economy of the State and the protection of its natural resources is vital to sustain its future.

We ask that you consider supporting a funding proposal (HB 2043) for Noxious Weed efforts in the amount of \$3.3 million. The ODA Noxious Weed Program would receive \$1.5 million of that to

help support its efforts and keep the biological control position intact and the Counties would receive \$1.8 million in the form of grants to help support their local programs.

Morrow County supports its Noxious Weed Control Program and the ODA Noxious Weed Control Program and the support they provide us in protecting and preserving the State's valuable resources. We ask that you support this funding proposal and help us in protecting Oregon State's agriculture and natural resources.

Respectfully,



Melissa Lindsay  
Chair



Don Russell  
Commissioner



Jim Doherty  
Commissioner