



Together. For Oregon's Land.

March 1, 2019

Testimony in support of HB 2020: with concern about the lack of a dedicated fund for natural and working lands

Before the Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction

Blue Mountains Conservancy
Blue Mountain Land Trust
Columbia Land Trust
Center for Natural Lands Management
Deschutes Land Trust
Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust
Greenbelt Land Trust
Klamath Lake Land Trust
Lower Nehalem Community Trust
McKenzie River Trust
North Coast Land Conservancy
Oregon Rangeland Trust
Pacific Forest Trust
Southern Oregon Land Conservancy
The Conservation Fund
The Nature Conservancy
The Wetlands Conservancy
The Trust for Public Land
Wallowa Land Trust
Wild Rivers Land Trust

The Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts (COLT) represents a diverse group of 21 land trusts operating across the state of Oregon. Our members and the hundreds of landowners they work with, have already seen the damaging effects of climate change on their farms and ranches, forests, and rivers, ranging from increased wildfire to water scarcity. They also have seen the role of natural lands in providing community resilience for flood absorption and species protection.

COLT applauds Oregon's step forward to address climate change through this meaningful legislation and **thanks this committee for your hard work advancing a new carbon program for Oregon.**

COLT, however, is disappointed that **the 2019 legislation fails to include a dedicated investment in rural areas and working lands.** HB 2020 as written represents a missed opportunity to draw on the resources and expertise of natural and working lands and landowners across the state.

As a state with significant natural resources, Oregon has a unique opportunity to position itself at the forefront of a new low-carbon economy. Natural climate solutions – like conservation, restoration and improved land management – are a critical, and cost-effective solution which can mitigate at least 37% of the problem globally, and provide a base of resources for adaptation to a changing climate. Oregon's uniquely rich and varied natural and working landscape must be part of the solution. We have more than 30 million acres of forests, comprising some of the best carbon sinks in the world, and more than 16 million acres of farms that could cheaply and efficiently sequester carbon in their soils. We have the opportunity to invest in our land for immediate benefits to both rural and urban communities.

Without a specific and substantial investment in natural and working lands, Oregon will miss an opportunity to leverage our

existing carbon storage resources, and won't be able to access the resources and expertise of rural landowners for future adaptation and mitigation. Rural landowners see the effects of climate change in devastating fires, droughts, and shifts in the seasons. An inclusive climate bill that invests in rural communities and working lands would be an opportunity to build a better environment and economy from the coast to the high desert. COLT urges the legislature to reconsider and specifically direct at least 37% of the revenues in the Climate Investments Fund be spent on natural and working lands.

We recognize and applaud all of the work that you and others have done to create a bill directly addressing the issues of climate change for all Oregonians. COLT and our member organizations thank you for your continued efforts to protect Oregon's precious natural resources.

Sincerely,



Kelley Beamer, executive director, COLT

"Natural climate solutions can provide 37% of cost-effective CO2 mitigation needed through 2030 for a >66% chance of holding warming to below 2 °C." (Griscom, Bronson; Adams, Justin; Ellis, Peter; Houghton, Richard; Lomax, Guy; Miteva, Daniela; Schlesinger, William; Shoch, David; Siikamäki, Juha; Smith, Pete; Woodbury, Peter; et al. October 2017. Natural Climate Solutions. PNAS. 114 (44) 11645-11650; <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1710465114>.)