



greenbelt land trust

101 SW Western Suite #111 • Correspondence to PO Box 1721 • Corvallis, OR 97339

Date: March 18th, 2019

To: The Honorable Senator Kathleen Taylor, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Jeff Reardon, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources

Testimony in Support of Senate Bills 5539 and 5540

Greenbelt Land Trust supports SB 5539 and SB 5540: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Budget and the recommended Policy Package 110 for personal services contracting.

Senate Bills SB 5539 and 5540 allocate funding to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to support the agency's operations and grant programs. Specifically, this allocation will provide funds to support the protection and restoration of Oregon's natural resource legacy including healthy watersheds, native species and habitats.

For 30 years the Greenbelt Land Trust has worked with willing private and public landowners in the mid-Willamette Valley to protect and enhance Oregon's remarkable legacy of natural resources including a rich community of native species, complex river and stream systems, and diverse floodplains and upland oak and prairie habitats. We have protected nearly 4000 acres of natural lands with the voluntary cooperation of many landowners who cherish the conservation values on their lands and have a strong desire to leave a legacy of these values for future generations. The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board has been a key partner with the Greenbelt Land Trust in providing funding to support the acquisition and restoration of nearly 1000 acres of the Willamette River floodplain. They have supported our work to restore hundreds of acres of upland oak and prairie habitats that not only provide homes to many native plants and animals, but also serve as a natural fire resistant barrier to adjacent residential communities. They have also supported innovative and effective collaborations that leveraged resources and capacity to achieve regional conservation outcomes.

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board's grant programs are unique and a model for many other states because they strategically invest in programs that offer the most important ecological benefits through a collaborative partnership with land trusts, watershed councils, soil and water conservation districts and many local governments. Greenbelt Land Trust appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments and we encourage you to fully support SB 5539 and 5540 to protect the future of our healthy watersheds.

Contact:

Michael Pope, Executive Director
Greenbelt Land Trust
541 752 -9609