



COALITION OF OREGON LAND TRUSTS

511 SE MORRISON ST. PORTLAND, OR 97214 • OREGONLANDTRUSTS.ORG

Senator Michael Dembrow
Chair, Senate Interim Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE, Salem, OR 97301

February 7, 2020

Re: Testimony in support of climate action now

On behalf of the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts and the 21 land trusts we represent, I am writing to express our strong support for climate action now. The Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts (COLT) represents over 20 non-profit organizations that work with communities across Oregon to protect clean water, fish and wildlife habitat and working farms, forests and ranches. **The majority of our members live and work in rural communities such as Enterprise, Port Orford, and Klamath Falls.** Our member organizations and partner landowners are already seeing the effects of climate change in devastating fires, droughts, and shifts in the seasons.

A rapidly changing climate will undermine the natural systems that support our communities and livelihoods. Rising temperatures and changing water flows will threaten our farms, forests, ranches, orchards, and vineyards, harm fish and wildlife habitat, and jeopardize outdoor recreation. That is the bad news. But there is good news: **Oregon's natural systems offer an immediate opportunity to help solve climate impacts in a cost-effective and immediate way.** Nature- our trees, soils, water and wetlands- can play an important role in sequestering and storing carbon, and providing pathways for adaptation and survival.

SB 1530 recognizes the importance of our natural and working lands in providing natural climate solutions. It invests in rural communities by dedicating 25% of proceeds for natural and working lands.

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 up to 37% of the problem globally. 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 and water for immediate benefits to both rural and urban communities.

SB 1530 is an important opportunity to leverage our existing carbon storage resources and access the expertise of rural landowners for future adaptation and mitigation.

SB 1530 provides Just Transition investment to help communities acquire the skills needed to cope with climate change, and prepare for new careers in climate-adapted technologies.

Rural landowners are already paying the price of climate change in devastating fires, droughts, and shifts in the seasons. Agriculture and forestry are already changing, and this legislation provides an on-ramp for these communities to successfully adapt. A comprehensive climate bill that includes investments in rural communities and working lands is an opportunity to build a better environment and economy in Oregon- from the coast to the high desert.

COLT and our members applaud all of the work that you and others have done to create a bill that directly addresses the issues of climate change for all Oregonians. **We urge the legislature to pass SB 1530 this session to reduce carbon emissions and catalyze investments in natural climate solutions.**

Sincerely,



Kelley Beamer, Executive Director, Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts

22 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS: BLUE MOUNTAIN LAND TRUST BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY CENTER FOR NATURAL LANDS MANAGEMENT COLUMBIA LAND TRUST DESCHUTES LAND TRUST DUCKS UNLIMITED 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 NORTHWEST RANGELAND TRUST OREGON DESERT LAND TRUST PACIFIC FOREST TRUST SOUTHERN OREGON LAND CONSERVANCY THE CONSERVATION FUND THE NATURE CONSERVANCY IN OREGON THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND THE WETLANDS CONSERVANCY WALLOWA LAND TRUST WILD RIVERS LAND TRUST

6 ASSOCIATE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS: CLACKAMAS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT FOREST PARK CONSERVANCY EAST MULTNOMAH SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT HELVETIA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION WESTERN RIVERS CONSERVANCY TUALATIN SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT