



CLACKAMAS SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
www.conservationdistrict.org

Good dirt. Clean water.

April 19, 2021

Attention: Natural Resources Subcommittee, Joint Ways and Means Committee

From: Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)

RE: Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) Budget

Co-Chairs Representative Reardon and Senator Taylor and Committee Members:

The Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District welcomes the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding the proposed funding cut in the department's Natural Resources Division in **Package 090**. The reduced funding would continue the vacancy of the management position in the SWCD Department that provides support and program development. As an organization that works directly with the Oregon Department of Agriculture on a variety of natural resource topics, including water quality and land conservation, we know all too well the importance of our natural resources to Oregonians. Having an ongoing vacancy of a position that provides support across the state for soil and water conservation districts has a stifling affect in what we can and should achieve in natural resource management and protection on both rural and urban lands. District staff members work with landowners to provide their technical experience on project development and provide cost-sharing on natural resource projects with landowners to secure additional funding from state, federal and non-profit partners. SWCDs are local governments with countywide elected boards.

Soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) throughout the state are statutorily linked with ODA and depend upon the agency for support in developing programs and providing support. Over the last several years, staff positions have continued to be cut in the SWCD section of ODA and yet districts are providing more extensive services at the local level in carrying out the work of the agency's Natural Resources Division.

Our request is to fill the management position that was deleted in Package 090 of the department's budget. Not filling that position will undermine the ability of for us to be successful in working cohesively with ODA in managing many of the state's natural resource programs, from wildfire prevention to technical support for working lands.

We sincerely thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on an issue of such importance to Oregonians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Lapp", written in a cursive style.

Christopher Lapp
District General Manager
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