

**Representative Susan McLain**

House District 29



May 12, 2021

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery

**Re: Support for House Bill 3185A**

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Heard, and Members of the Committee:

I write to you today about House Bill 3185A, which passed both the Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources and the House Floor unanimously, and is now before your Committee.

In 2019 the Legislature successfully passed [House Bill 2437](#), which established the Agricultural Channel Maintenance Program. The maintenance of agricultural drainage ditches is critical to maintaining healthy functional farmland in the wet parts of the state. HB 2437 successfully created a process for authorizing ditch cleaning that is workable for farmers while ensuring that ecological values associated with ditches are maintained and protected.

House Bill 3185 will clarify the intent behind the Agricultural Channel Maintenance Program that any materials removed from traditionally maintained channels during approved ditch maintenance will not be placed in or on undisturbed wetlands, either temporarily or permanently. This bill is a simple yet important clarification that will make clear in statute the original intent behind the program to ensure that the program honors the ecological values associated with ditches.

House Bill 3185 is the result of extensive conversations involving the Oregon Farm Bureau, WaterWatch, The Nature Conservancy, and Trout Unlimited to ensure that the fix put forward protects the intent of the Agricultural Channel Maintenance Program. I encourage you to pass HB 3185.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan McLain".

Representative Susan McLain