



The Nature Conservancy in Oregon
821 SE 14th Avenue
Portland, OR 97214-2537

tel 503 802-8100

fax 503 802-8199

nature.org/oregon

February 10, 2022

House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use and Water

Testimony on HB 4060

Submitted by: Amelia Porterfield, Director of Government Relations

Chair Helm and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HB 4060, which aims to identify and obtain federal support for natural resource programs.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is a science-based, non-partisan organization committed to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. In Oregon, TNC has over 80,000 supporters and members in every county. Based in communities around the state, we manage lands and waters in varied ecosystems and partner with ranchers, farmers, fishers, timber and environmental interests on some of the most challenging conservation issues facing people and nature.

There is an urgent and ongoing need to increase agency capacity and investment in our state's natural resources, and Oregon's natural resources can only benefit from effective utilization of both state and federal funds. A common discussion point during Natural Resources Agency budget development is the lack of capacity available to undertake the efforts necessary to access federal grants and other dollars that could support core needs. Money is being left on the table while the agencies' work is suffering from financial strictures.

This has been particularly acute related to water management and sustainability. Although the investments secured for water resources in the 2021 legislative session were substantial, the acquisition of additional federal support is critical to ensure continued progress into the future. The Nature Conservancy supports efforts like HB 4060 which will help address that challenge.

We look forward to seeing the amendments mentioned during the public hearing, and are interested in the discussion about where to appropriately house this program long-term to ensure the natural resource focus is maximized.

With the incoming federal allocations and perhaps subsequent packages as well, we support efforts to build the capacity necessary to ensure the state is well positioned to utilize these opportunities for investment. Thank you for bringing this bill forward.