



TO: Sen. Jeff Golden
CC: Sen. Lynn Findley & Rep. Mark Owens
FM: Shaun Robertson, President Grant County Farm Bureau
DT: February 8, 2023
RE: SB69

On behalf of the membership and Board of Directors of the Grant County Farm Bureau, I am writing in support of SB69, which proposes to direct the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to develop and adopt by rule an invasive grass pilot program in the former Murderer's Creek Wildlife Area.

While we are supportive of ODFW and other agency efforts to control invasive grasses on the wildlife area, we note that there are a few examples where private landowners are much further ahead in their control and eradication of invasive grasses on their own private lands through their private conservation measures. It's not clear whether the ODFW understands those efforts or is even aware of—or interested in—those private initiatives. In addition, a common impression among local landowners is that local agencies, including ODFW, are spending millions of taxpayer dollars on studies various studies but rarely, if ever, report the results back to the community.

In our opinion, this bill would be substantially improved if: 1) as part of its program development that ODFW was required to consider successful control efforts on private lands as potential implementation measures for the wildlife area; and 2) that when ODFW reports its implementation to the legislature that it also reports to the local community with particular efforts for outreach to private landowners (whom actually own and manage most of the critical big game winter range habitats that are similarly invaded with noxious weeds).