



The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

Feb. 8, 2023

To: [Senator Jeff Golden](#), Chair
[Senator Fred Girod](#), Vice-Chair
[Senate Committee On Natural Resources](#)

Re: [SB 530](#) – Natural and Working Lands – Support

The League of Women Voters of Oregon (LWVOR) thanks you for the opportunity to provide our comments in support for the Natural and Working Lands bill (SB 530). The bill is based on the Global Warming Commission's [2021 Climate Change and Carbon Proposal](#) and last year's [SB 1534A](#) which the League also supported. The positions that clearly support SB 530 are included at the end of this letter.

The following provisions from SB 530 conform to the League's positions for making policy decisions. The bill:

- Defines natural and working lands (NWL) as forests, woodlands, grasslands, sagebrush steppes, deserts, freshwater and riparian systems, wetlands, coastal and estuarine areas which are critical for fighting climate change. These lands act as a resilient and robust carbon sink.
- Establishes the policy direction to advance carbon sequestration and resilience strategies.
- Invests in a comprehensive Oregon natural and working lands inventory and study.
- Directs Oregon State University's *Institute for Natural Resources* to develop metrics for carbon storage, a NWL carbon inventory baseline, and study of the potential impact of increased carbon sequestration strategies on workforce and economic development and to identify opportunities for ***workforce development and training***.
- Provides funding to state agencies for existing programs and technical support that incentivize voluntary practices that offer simple, proven solutions to increase resilience in natural working lands, thereby reducing climate impacts on communities and land managers who are already experiencing severe drought, tree and crop losses, heat domes, and flooding.

The bill promotes such activities as:

- Supporting longer logging rotations on private lands;
- Protecting mature and old-growth forests on public lands;
- Protecting coastal communities from sea-level rise and storm surge;
- Protecting and recovering drinking watersheds and wetlands;
- Planting cover crops on agricultural lands; and
- Planting more trees in urban areas.

Carbon sequestration supports a strong economy. These incentive-based programs will help small forest owners, ranchers, farmers and fisheries in rural areas thrive under changing climate conditions.

SB 530 is legislation that is strongly supported by several League positions:

Agriculture: The LWVUS believes that “agricultural policy should encourage a system of sustainable, regenerative agricultural production that moves toward an environmentally sound agricultural sector. This includes promoting stewardship to preserve and protect the country’s human and natural agricultural resources.”

Water: Concerning offshore and coastal management, the LWVOR “believes responsible and responsive government management of the public’s coastal and nearshore natural resources shall be based upon a complete environmental assessment, cumulative impact analysis, and baseline data specific to Oregon. And our water position includes the League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that water is a resource that should be managed for the benefit of the public and as sustainable habitat for all life forms.

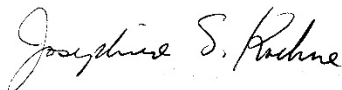
Forests: The LWVOR’s new forestry positions state “All benefits of the forests—ecological, human and economic—are inextricably interconnected. Healthy forests are essential to habitat for a diversity of plant and animal life, to the hydrologic cycle, and to carbon storage to mitigate global warming. In addition, healthy forests are essential to a forest-products industry with the jobs and goods they provide, and to the economic and aesthetic values of their recreational opportunities. The LWVOR supports laws and policies to ensure that forest management is carried out in a manner that will sustain healthy forests, streams and habitats.”

Climate: And lastly, in 2016, “the LWVUS supports aggressive efforts to restore balance to the planet’s climate systems by reducing the atmospheric carbon dioxide to 350 parts per million (ppm), the upper safe limit. The target set by scientists requires an immediate 8% global greenhouse gas emissions reduction annually; in conjunction with carbon dioxide storage through mass reforestation, and soil management.”

We thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on the Natural Working Lands bill, SB 530, and urge your support for this important bill.



Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President



Josie Koehne
LWVOR Forest Climate Portfolio



Claudia Keith
Climate Coordinator

Cc: [Senator Dembrow](#), [Representative Marsh](#), [Senator Golden](#), [Representative Neron](#), [Senator Frederick](#), [Senator Patterson](#), [Representative Gamba](#), [Representative Gomberg](#), [Representative Helm](#), [Representative Hudson](#), [Representative Pham K](#), [Board of Forestry](#)