



February 15, 2023

RE: SB 530 Natural Climate Solutions

Dear Chair Golden and members of the Committee,

The West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District (WMSWCD) is a publicly funded local government special district whose mission is to provide resources, information, and expertise to inspire people to actively improve air and water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and soil health. We work with property owners to make improvements to their land for both productivity and for habitat benefits.

We support SB 530, which will help increase carbon sequestration and improve climate resilience by providing incentives and technical support for farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners to implement climate-smart land management practices (e.g. Natural Climate Solutions) on Oregon's agricultural lands, forests, and wetlands. Soil and Water Conservation Districts will be important partners in this effort, providing information to the land operators and owners in their districts to promote carbon practices. Natural Climate Solutions are a win-win for Oregon's climate, working lands owners and managers, and communities across the state: The same practices that sequester and store carbon also make our lands and waters more resilient to climate-fueled drought, wildfires, and extreme temperatures.

Healthy soils produce healthier crops, retain more moisture, and improve water quality, while increasing producers' net earnings over time. And, healthy forests provide clean drinking water, habitat for fish and wildlife, and protection from wildfire. This commonsense legislation will help ensure our forests, waters, and agricultural lands and natural resource economy is more resilient in the face of ever-worsening climate impacts, while maximizing carbon sequestration to help achieve our climate goals.

SB 530 will fund and direct state agencies to provide incentives and technical support to forest owners, farmers, and ranchers to implement natural climate solutions on natural and working lands; It will also invest in a comprehensive Oregon natural and working lands inventory and study opportunities for workforce development and training. SB 530 will position us to leverage the historic federal funding recently and enable us to create a source of state funding for voluntary actions to remove climate pollution from the atmosphere and store it in natural and working lands.

We believe the legislature must make the most of this unprecedented opportunity to achieve our climate sequestration and resilience goals and ensure that communities with the greatest need can benefit from these funds. We strongly urge you to vote yes on SB 530.

Thank you,

Terri Preeg Riggsby
Chair and Zone 5 Director

cc: West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Directors; Oregon Association of Conservation Districts