

Jeanne Carver
Imperial Stock Ranch / Shaniko Wool Company
Testimony in favor of SB 530.

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Girod, members of the Committee, my name is Jeanne Carver. My family's ranch is the Imperial Stock Ranch (est 1871) in north central Oregon, and our headquarters are located 12 miles from the ghost town of Shaniko. I'm also the Founder and President of Shaniko Wool Company, launched in 2018.

I am proud to be part of a broad coalition of farmers and ranchers across Oregon who are urging you to pass SB 530 this session. We cannot wait longer to take action.

Since 1989, we've implemented a Conservation Management Plan for our entire operation, with the health of natural resources as our primary focus. Our ranch has produced sheep, cattle, grains and hay throughout its history. My husband was a leader in the Buckhollow Watershed Project which saw spawning salmon go from 2 in 1990, to thousands in less than 20 years. That project was the forerunner to what we now know as the Oregon Plan, which blankets the state of Oregon with stakeholders and collaborative work in all watersheds in the state.

Grazing animals are an important part of our management plan. We implemented a host of practices over the years and continue to adapt our management. Included are

- a designed rotational grazing system for all livestock,
- strategic placement of mineral supplements,
- development of off-stream watering points through spring developments and construction of sediment catch-basins to capture, store and safely release water from natural precipitation,
- all farm ground is dry land farming, and we converted all of it to no-till / annual cropping in 1996, making the plow obsolete; and we graze all of it in addition to the plant and grain harvests the land provides.

In 1999, we attempted to sell our wool like "usual," but due to closure of regional processing facilities and the massive offshoring of our textile sector, we could no longer sell wool. We also had only one option for selling lamb in the western U.S. at that time, due to consolidation in the food sector. Our choice was to find our own way to markets with wool and lamb or sheep would be gone from the landscape.

As we developed products and went direct to market in 2000, I instinctively paired our heritage and sustainable practices with those products. It resonated with customers. 13 years later, Ralph Lauren chose our wool for their first ever Made in America uniforms for Team USA for the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia and since. They also told our story, driving more and more brands to our door.

One of those was Patagonia. They asked us to be third-party audited for our land stewardship and animal husbandry practices under a new global standard that was being developed. We saw

it as an opportunity, and when this international Responsible Wool Standard was launched in 2016, we became the first ranch in the world to be certified. As demand began growing for RWS certified wool, I established Shaniko Wool Company to scale the supply of U.S. wool meeting this leading wool standard. Today, Shaniko Wool is the only supply of RWS wool produced in North America.

I work closely with brands, large and small, from start-ups to global fashion brands, and every day I hear their increasing concern over the ecosystem impacts of farming and ranching. Up until now, all we had was our observations, yield data, species counts, some monitoring and agency testimony about the health of the land. We had never measured it. *I felt it was time to actually measure those impacts.* I believed we would see a net positive result, but I wasn't sure. In early 2020, with the help of a team of range scientists from Oregon State University, I launched our Carbon Initiative to do 2 things:

- 1) Determine the carbon footprint of each ranching operation in the farm group.
- 2) And quantify the annual *net* carbon capture with third-party verification.

There are many positive reasons to do this. One of those, is the opportunity to monetize measured / verified ecosystem performance. There are 10 ranches in the Shaniko Wool farm group. Collectively, we graze 2.6 million acres. Here's what 3 years of verified data on just our Oregon ranch looks like:

We are banking 60,000 tons of soil organic carbon each of the past 3 years *NET* – even in a drought cycle. We've accounted for our electrical use, equipment and fossil fuels, fertilizer inputs and methane emissions from the livestock. We deliver multiple harvests of beef, lamb, wool, grains and hay to market, and draw down more than 218,000 tons of CO₂ from the atmosphere while doing so. Our GHG emissions total a negative number and we've reduced that by another 9,000 tons each year with our management and practices.

This is the most important work I've ever done. Our ranch has signed a 10-year contract for our carbon capture and high-quality carbon credits. My goal is to deliver this opportunity to every ranch in my farm group. They already make a 20 – 25% premium for their wool due to the RWS certification. But this is bigger.

Since February of 2022, Shaniko Wool has been working with a carbon marketing company from Europe who is establishing business in the U.S. Their science team has taken a deep look at our measurement model, sampling protocols, data and findings. They have approved our model as meeting the criteria to be verified by Verra, the leading carbon registry. And Shaniko Wool has been approved as its own "PROJECT" to deliver high quality carbon credits to the voluntary carbon market. These ecosystem service and carbon market companies are important new stakeholders for farmers and ranchers. They bring a framework that can provide new revenue to ranchers, a regulated and verified offset/inset program to the companies who purchase our credits, which accelerates action on the ground and supports our collective effort. Textile and fashion brands are following our work with great interest.

I am in negotiations right now with multiple global fashion brands who are planning to start manufacturing in America again, sourcing wool from Shaniko Wool. Why? For two reasons:

1. Because we meet the RWS standard.
2. Because our measurement initiative is of great interest and value to them.

These brands now have an opportunity to invest in carbon insets with the same growers from whom they source RWS wool. They become an investor in regenerative agriculture at scale. More dollars go to the ranchers for additional improvements, because of measured and verified positive ecosystem impact, scaling our work. And the brand moves toward their 2030 targets and net zero. Everyone wins, first and foremost, the land. We build broader and deeper relationships with nature positive impacts.

This is vital and critically important work. The Natural Climate Solutions Bill will provide other farmers and ranchers with inventory & monitoring tools to help them expand their markets and/or enter carbon markets just as we have.

I urge you to vote YES on SB 530. Thank you.

Respectfully,
Jeanne Carver