



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor



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April 27, 2023

Dr. Lisa Gaines, Director  
Institute of Natural Resources  
Strand Agriculture Hall 231  
170 SW Waldo Place  
Corvallis, OR 97331

Dear Dr. Gaines,

Please accept this letter of gratitude and support for the Institute for Natural Resources (INR), a partnership among Oregon's higher education establishments and housed at Oregon State University.

Established by the Legislature in 2001, INR's mission is to provide reliable, objective, relevant, and science-based integrated natural resource knowledge to facilitate long-term stewardship of Oregon's environment and natural resources. The Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) relies on reliable, objective, relevant science to fulfill our own mission:

*The Oregon Department of Energy helps Oregonians make informed decisions and maintain a resilient and affordable energy system. We advance solutions to shape an equitable clean energy transition, protect the environment and public health, and responsibly balance energy needs and impacts for current and future generations.*

We appreciate your service as a member of ODOE's [Energy Advisory Work Group](#), a statutorily required forum to share information and provide feedback on strategic priorities and long-term vision for ODOE. We also appreciate the recent collaboration between, ODOE, INR, and the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) on a federal grant from the Department of Defense for the first Oregon Renewable Energy Siting Assessment. This project helped us bring \$1 million in federal funding to the state. Working together, ODOE, DLCD, and INR created a data-driven tool to facilitate renewable energy development that considers potential benefits or impacts to natural resources, communities, military training, and more. This will highlight opportunities for renewable energy and transmission development that are ecologically, socially, and economically implementable. This information has been made available for renewable energy developers, reviewing agencies, and the general public with the goal of using shared information to identify and minimize conflicts.

INR staff bring deep expertise in data and information integration and management, developing interactive GIS mapping and reporting tools, and assessing built and natural resources. The team leveraged the Oregon Explorer (OE) platform, which provides access to integrated data and information organized by topic, location, and data formats. The Oregon Renewable Energy Siting Assessment tool is more robust and effective because of state agencies partnering with INR.

With gratitude for your work leading an asset to the state and state agencies,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janine Be". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Janine Benner, Director  
Oregon Department of Energy

**College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**  
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April 26, 2023

Sen. Lew Frederick, Co-Chair  
Rep. Susan McLain, Co-Chair  
Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
Subcommittee on Education  
900 Court St. NE, H-178  
Salem, OR, 97301

RE: Support for Institute for Natural Resources

Dear Co-Chairs,

I am writing to you in support of the Institute for Natural Resources, a joint project between Portland State University and Oregon State University.

The Institute for Natural Resource's goal is to advance the use of centralized, science-based natural resource information to benefit Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. They conduct research; manage, analyze, and interpret data; provide technical assistance and analysis; and link science to natural resource decision making. In this time of emerging climate threats and imperiled biodiversity, their work is more important than ever.

Although most of INR's work is funded by agreements with state and federal partners, some amount of stable state funding is required for program administration. Without legislative support, continued existence of INR will depend on the ability of the universities to provide resources. In past years, legislative funds have been used to support the Director's salary, to hire students, and as a required match for federal funds. These state funds allow INR to leverage federal dollars to continue their important work.

At Portland State University, the Institute for Natural Resources is housed in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, where they provide unique work, research, and mentoring opportunities for students and early career professionals interested in careers in natural resource management. Their close engagement furthers student persistence and success.

INR provides Oregon an exceptional value. It serves as a one-stop information clearing house, efficiently making decision-ready natural resource information available to state and federal partners. INR is able to provide these services to state agencies at a lower cost than if individual agencies maintained the information themselves.

I strongly encourage you to support continued funding of the Institute for Natural Resources and the important work they do to aid informed natural resource decision making.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Todd Rosenstiel".

Todd Rosenstiel, Dean, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences



April 26, 2023

RE: Letter in support of the Institute for Natural Resources Submitted to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education

Dear Senator Frederick and Representative McLain:

My name is Lisa DeBruyckere, and I am President of Creative Resource Strategies, LLC, an Oregon certified woman-owned business that has been providing consulting services to natural resource organizations in the western states and Canada since 2002.

I am writing to you today to share my strong support for the role the Institute for Natural Resources plays in advancing science-based natural resource information for the state of Oregon.

My company ([www.createstrat.com](http://www.createstrat.com)) has provided services to federal, state, and local governments, nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, and tribal sovereign nations to advance science-based conservation that enhances the quality of life for all Oregonians. The Institute for Natural Resources has played a pivotal role advancing science and information on numerous important projects. For example:

- They manage *iMapInvasives*, the state's invasive species database, which tracks the existence and management of invasive species statewide. This tool has allowed land managers to share invasive species across jurisdictions, and has advanced the state's ability to manage invasive species in an adaptive management context. The *iMapInvasives* database was integral to the success of many initiatives of the Oregon Invasive Species Council during my 7-year tenure as their contract coordinator.
- INR administers the Historical Vegetation Mapping Project, which allows land managers to understand the composition of past landscapes to better understand our changing ecosystems. This project has been integral to a variety of projects I have worked on with natural resource partners.

- INR administers landscape assessment and monitoring projects, which creates science and knowledge delivery modules to advanced understanding of watershed-level prioritization of fuel treatments, integral to addressing stressors associated with climate change, such as water supply and drought conditions. Integrating economics with science in a systematic way allows land managers to operate using an optimized decision support system, which results in better, timely, strategic management decisions.

INR has worked on many other projects and databases other than the three I have listed above. Their staff are helpful and knowledgeable, and are highly regarded among the western states and provinces.

I strongly encourage you to support continued funding of the Institute for Natural Resources to ensure that sound science is available to inform the challenging management issues land management and agencies face, particularly in light of emerging climate change stressors and other threats to Oregon.

Thank you for your continued service to the citizens of Oregon.

Sincerely,



Lisa A. DeBruyckere, President  
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