

Submitter: Jill Welborn

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3173

February 2, 2025

Honorable Oregon Legislature

RE: HB3173

Dear Oregon Lawmakers,

I am writing in support of HB3173 to provide a stable income source to the Oregon Flora Project. While I have personally provided my own modest financial support to the project over the years, a more reliable base of support is needed for the project to sustain operations. There is a very dedicated community that I am sure would continue to cost-share the project, including myself.

I am an independent botanical worker. I do restoration, consulting, and scientific monitoring for various clients, including the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, Columbia Land Trust, Deschutes National Forest, and Ochoco Forest Restoration Collaborative. This work requires the use of botanical information provided by Oregon Flora Project. Specifically, I can see plant species distributions, compare specimen images online, check scientific names, and perform other technical tasks related to botanical, ecological, and restoration work in these important ecosystems. Having the information specific to Oregon at the County level is invaluable. While there may be national databases out there providing taxonomic information, having a reference created and maintained by Oregon's most knowledgeable plant experts is simply invaluable. The quality and relevance of the information is far superior to more generic sources.

I also am serving as Board President for the Crooked River Weed Management Area. We collaborate with partner agencies and offer outreach to landowners, livestock producers, and home gardeners regarding weed identification and control. The Oregon Flora also is an invaluable resource for this work. Again, being able to access mapped collections, known weed locations and species across the state allows for more information to be shared and more effective control strategies for our working landscapes.

Finally, I also teach General Botany as a part-time faculty member at the Central Oregon Community College Prineville campus. We are very proud to be able to offer a lab-science class in botany here. It is attracting both young students and resource professionals needing professional development in this area. Since we do not have an herbarium on-site, the Oregon Flora Project's website is a key web-based

resource allowing students to learn about and research Oregon's flora. We will be using the website as a major resource for the course.

In sum, you can see how important the Oregon Flora Project is in my work as a small business, restoration practitioner, community member, and educator. I can't imagine doing my work without it. I will continue to support the project through my donations and advocacy, but I ask the citizens of Oregon to join me to share in this support. Caring for the plant species and communities that sustain all life in Oregon is what the Oregon Flora Project is all about.

Sincerely,
Jill Welborn
Prineville, Oregon