

Submitter: Kimberly Brown
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

Kimberly Brown
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Dear Committee members:

I am an ecologist, an avid gardener, and the Secretary for the Native Plant Society of Oregon and OregonFlora has become a critical resource for all of these roles.

I am involved in a variety of restoration projects in Oregon that focus on bringing back the ecosystem services to areas degraded by past development or agriculture. In order to do this, we need data on what native plant species were historically in the area and/or what native plant species could do well with the current environmental conditions. OregonFlora has made all parts of this work easier. Before, we would spend hours combing through different agency websites and published floras for what we needed. Now, we have everything we need in one spot.

Native plant gardening has surged in recent years. I use OregonFlora's Grow Natives section to filter for plants based on certain site characteristics to plan my garden, but I also regularly have people reaching out to me as the Secretary for the Native Plant Society about resources that will tell them about native plants in their area. I always guide them to OregonFlora's website. OregonFlora has become such an easy to use resource for so many who are doing their part to support wildlife, conserve water, and improve soil conditions on their land.

One of the best parts about OregonFlora is not only have they aggregated a large amount of data from a variety of agencies into one spot, but they have made accessing this data user friendly for everyone from botanists to the average gardener. I anticipate the need for this resource to only grow in the future and we should leverage what has already been done and continue to invest in keeping it up to date to the benefit of our state agencies, our local economies, and our environment.

I strongly urge the committee to support OregonFlora and to allocate funding for this resource.

Thank you,
Kimberly Brown