

Submitter: Robin L Hansen
On Behalf Of: HB3173 OregonFlora
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

My support for Oregon Flora and its many aspects is unwavering and \$400,000 per biennium will keep those resources up to date in an ever-changing environment. The nursery, cattle and farming industries provide the state of Oregon with the necessary financial support to take care of all its citizens. To do that, we must know our resources and how to use them. That means being prepared for pests, diseases, multiple uses of our lands and plants and continued good health of all. It also means providing our citizens with the plant knowledge to help themselves, to provide open spaces for hiking and camping and to support our industries, and to provide a bulwark against the importation of damaging animals and diseases.

To do that we need constant, updated knowledge and the Oregon Flora focuses on plants that other agencies and businesses do not have time, trained personnel or budgets for. If you've ever tried to determine what a plant is and thrown up your hands at what you think is an impossibility, you'll know how much study, field time and training is involved. As farmers, knowing plants gives you the means to grow effectively. All of this plant related knowledge involves other natural resources, water being perhaps the most obvious. What Oregon Flora learns is passed on to other state agencies such as the OR Dept. of Agriculture, Water Resources, etc. so those employees can do their jobs more effectively. In essence, Oregon can meet its mission of providing the tools necessary to sustain us all. Without knowledge of all kinds, we are poverty-stricken.

For many years - in fact since I started the nursery in 1986 - I have struggled year after year to find information on how to source, let alone grow, our natives. Information was non-existent and what little I found came out of often desperate attempts to "pick the brains" of friends, gardeners and fellow nurserymen. Bear in mind that Hitchcock and Cronquist's Flora of the Pacific Northwest was first published in 1973!!!! Fifty years without a new and comprehensive resource is nearly incomprehensible. The Oregon Flora project made that happen. The data available to the public needs to be continually updated - new plants continue to be discovered, names change, locations change, plants can disappear or appear in new places. Updates to this information can give us warning if plants are becoming endangered or new invasives are discovered.

This bill will allow a modest 31-year investment in data management and sharing to continue providing support to many branches of government and hence to the citizens of this state. In the current political climate, with federal budgets slashed continuously and disastrously, we must support essential, basic resources for our

well-being and health and for our physical resources as a state. Just a reminder - individual citizens of Oregon have been well aware of the importance of the Oregon Flora projects for many years. Now we're asking for a little more and more consistent support.