



**WEST MULTNOMAH**  
Soil & Water Conservation District

February 27, 2019

The Honorable Michael Dembrow, Chair  
The Honorable Alan Olsen, Vice-Chair  
Senate Committee on Natural Resources  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem Oregon 97301

Re: Public Testimony for SB 445

Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Olsen and Members of the Senate Committee:

We are writing to provide support for Senate Bill (SB) 445 relating to the Oregon Invasive Species Council (OISC). With the addition of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department as an *ex officio* member of the OISC, passage of SB 445 leads to more effective coordination among state natural resource agencies. Further, SB 445's expansion of the voting membership on the OISC to include balanced, geographical representation better connects the Council to more regional and localized invasive species concerns. Most importantly, SB 445's General Fund appropriation of \$250,000 to the OISC is essential to the function of the Council. This amount of funding for education, early detection and rapid response and management and control of unwanted invaders represents just a mere fraction of the billions in potential social, economic and ecological losses to Oregon should establishment occur. Ideally, we would like to see that amount doubled or tripled.

The West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District is a public service district dedicated to the conservation of soil and water resources for people, wildlife and the environment. Our service territory is that portion of Multnomah County west of the Willamette River, all of Sauvie Island including the Columbia County portion of the Island and a portion of Washington County that lies within an area in the north Tualatin Mountains known as Bonny Slope. One of our priority conservation goals is the prevention, early detection-rapid response, and management and control of invasive species. By definition, invasive species are those introduced plants, animals, pathogens, insects, and aquatic organisms that spread rapidly due to a lack of biological controls and such spread leads to ecological, economic and social harm to people and the environment. We work closely with agriculture, range, and forest landowners and have witnessed the benefits of the impactful work supported by the Oregon Invasive Species Council, including both gypsy moth and Japanese beetle eradication projects in and around Portland.

Invasive weeds, pathogens and insects are one of the top threats to our valued natural resources in Oregon. The OISC is the only state entity tasked with developing, coordinating and

implementing invasive species planning and response efforts across Oregon. Since its creation in 2001, the OISC remains underfunded – which puts Oregon at grave risk of an unwanted introduction of an invasive species such as the emerald ash borer or quagga mussel – two examples that if allowed to become established would create huge impacts to Oregon’s economy, ecology and recreational opportunity.

Examples of the Council’s work includes the following. The Council developed the *Oregon Statewide Strategic Plan for Invasive Species (2017-2027)* and the *Oregon Statewide Action Plan for Invasive Species (2017-2019)* to strategize: 1) Prevention, 2) Early Detection-Rapid Response, 3) Control & Management, 4) Education & Outreach, and 5) Coordination & Leadership invasive species efforts across the State. Oregon is under constant pressure of newly introduced invasive species, with numerous pathways identified in these statewide plans, including industrial shipping, rail movement, air travel, truck transport, and people. Whether its gypsy moth arriving from Asia on imported steel, Japanese beetle hitching a ride on outdoor furniture from an out-of-state mover, quagga and zebra mussels coming in on contaminated boats, or contaminated out-of-state firewood being brought to a new resident’s first visit to an Oregon State Park, Oregon is under constant threat of new invaders that would devastate Oregon should they become established.

In summary, imagine Oregon without conifer trees due to constant gypsy moth defoliation; collapsed vineyard, nursery and orchard industries due to insatiable Japanese beetle appetites; and waterbodies and irrigation canals choked and clogged with quagga, zebra mussels or invasive aquatic weeds. Besides these direct losses, imagine the indirect economic loss arising from restricted markets and curtailment of out of state export opportunities for Oregon products due to quarantines on affected industries. So, the very nature and economic backbones of Oregon are at risk. Passage of SB 445 strengthens the OISC as Oregon’s champion dedicated to preventing and controlling these type of nightmares for Oregon. As such, we implore the Senate Committee to give SB 445 a “Do Pass” recommendation to help protect the character, ecology and economic livelihood of Oregon.

Sincerely,



Terri Preeg Riggsby,

Chair and Zone 5 Director

West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District

Enclosure – The Other Side of Invasive Species Pests in Oregon

cc: Helmuth Rogg, Chair, Oregon Invasive Species Council  
West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Directors

# THE OTHER SIDE OF INVASIVE PESTS IN OREGON

Invasive pests in Oregon can have far reaching effects beyond the well-known negative impacts on agricultural economy and natural resources. Invasive pests can also directly affect market access and jobs, water quality, watersheds, pesticide use, and human health.

## 1. Protecting Oregon's Natural Resources and Agricultural Economy

Invasive pests, such as Gypsy moth, Japanese beetle, scotch broom, Armenian blackberry, sudden oak death, are threatening Oregon's agricultural and natural resources. ODA's Invasive Pest Programs keep invasive pests out of Oregon, through **quarantine regulations**, apply the **Early Detection and Rapid Response** approach and implement **eradication projects** and **biological control** to manage invasive pests.

## 2. Water Quality, Watershed Protection, and Pesticides

Invasive pests have a critical impact on water quality, watershed health, and pesticide use. The **Spotted Wing Drosophila**, an invasive vinegar fly pest, has caused increased pesticide use in orchards and has disrupted many of the advances in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices. Its adverse impact on fruit crop production has sometimes resulted in increased spray regimens of every 5-7 days.

We have successfully kept the **Gypsy moth**, out of Oregon for more than 30 years with early detection and successful eradication programs. Continuous defoliation by Gypsy moth caterpillars in the eastern US has shown to increase water and soil temperatures. These temperature increases can have a series of cascading adverse effects on other wildlife and riparian plant communities.

The **Waterprimrose, *Ludwigia***, is a serious aquatic noxious weed that is threatening millions of Dollars of watershed restoration investment in the Willamette river. *Ludwigia* is changing water and soil chemistry adversely impacting salmon and waterfowl habitat. In addition, *Ludwigia*-infested waterways lose more water through accelerated evaporation.

**Flowering rush** is an escaped ornamental that invades and dominates slow moving waters with muddy substrates up to 20 feet deep. It threatens irrigation systems on the Columbia River, salmon migrating through the Columbia, and water quality in general. This noxious aquatic plant forms large monocultures that outcompete native plants.

## 3. Market Access and Jobs

Oregon's nursery and agricultural products must be certified as pest-free before they can be exported to other states and foreign countries. Without our invasive pest surveys, many Oregon products could not be shipped and agricultural businesses would be severely affected. This would directly result in market and job losses for those involved in the production and exportation of commodities.

## 4. Human Health

Invasive pests have the potential to affect every aspect of our lives, including human health. Mosquitoes can vector West Nile virus, Dengue virus, and other human and animal diseases. The hair of Gypsy moth caterpillars can cause allergic reactions in sensitive people.

## SUMMARY

An effective Early Detection and Rapid Response system for invasive pests will decrease adverse impacts to Oregon by maintaining access to important export markets, protecting Oregon's natural resources and agricultural economy, including watersheds and water quality, reducing pesticide applications, and decreasing potential impacts to human health.



For more information:  
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**Oregon**  
Department  
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