

4/17/2021

To: State Legislature - Ways and Means committee  
From: Robert D Winn – Louise Jausaud Oregon Trust  
RE: Funding for OSU Extension Service – 2021 fiscal year

First, by way of explanation let me tell you who I am, and why we have an interest in this funding issue for OSU extension services. I am a 3rd generation owner/trustee of the trust listed above. We own 6,200 acres of timber/grazing land in Wallowa County on the Promise Road between Wallowa and Troy. It was purchased by my grandfather in 1956. When he and my grandmother passed, my parents ran it from 1986 till 2011 when my father passed away. My mother is now 98, and I have been running it since 2011, 4,200 acres of timber and 2000 of pasture. We harvest the timber, and lease the pasture for grazing of cattle in the summer.

When my grandparents passed away, my parents had never been involved in the ranch (my Dad was a career Marine officer/ 27 yrs.) and had a 2nd career as the airport manager in Walla Walla, Wa. They immediately began to attend classes all over the state conducted by OSU extensions services to learn the ins and outs of running this business in a prudent, productive, and responsible manner for long term sustained productivity. Paul Oester, the extensions agent out of La Grande, Ore. became their consultant and go-to person along with the Oregon State forestry office in Wallowa. By the late 1990's, they had been awarded Oregon Tree farmer of the year, and were honored in Salem, Oregon at a large gathering hosted by the then Governor.

In 1995, we set up a Winn Family Trust so that I would eventually be able to manage the ranch when they no longer became capable due to age or passing. I immediately immersed myself in classes, field trips, and day long seminars conducted all over Eastern, Oregon by the OSU extensions services, to gain the knowledge they had acquired by the same process. I have been the sole manager of this property since my fathers passing in 2011. Throughout this last "Pandemic year" I have been taking Thursday night seminar Zoom classes conducted by the OSU extension services throughout the state, led by John Punches, our extension agent in La Grande.

Any shortfall in funding, or a reduction of the marginal increase in funding for the upcoming fiscal year, would impact landowners like myself and others with smaller properties or much larger operations. These extensions agents are our primary source of education, and consultation when problems arise like fire management, insect infestations, draught conditions, property tree species management, proper harvest and regeneration techniques, and more.

Take it from a responsible and conscientious land owner – OSU extension services are invaluable to me and my family. We are currently in the process of setting up a program to pass this land to my 2 daughters and sons-in-law, and a grandson who is currently enrolled in Forestry and the University of Georgia. That would be 5 generations.

Please take this letter into consideration in your legislative deliberations of the budget of OSU Extension Services.

Robert D. Winn