

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 3173. OregonFlora is an essential tool for Oregon biologists, teachers, horticulturists, agronomists, natural resources managers, gardeners, and everyone who wants to explore and learn about Oregon's native plants and natural habitats.

Botanists use regional publications called floras that are a comprehensive atlas of all the plants found in that region. For decades Oregon has not had a modern, reliable flora. Plant scientists in Oregon had to rely on outdated publications, or floras that were written mostly for the State of Washington that included Northern Oregon, or California Floras that included many of Southern Oregon's native plant species. Now, thanks to Oregon Flora we will have a three-volume Oregon flora that geographically covers all of Oregon's native plants from border to border. Volume three will be published this year.

I assume you have taken the time to check out OregonFlora's website. As you saw the wealth of available information is incredible. I have used the OregonFlora website for years. When I was a high school biology teacher, I had my students use it as part of our ecology unit. As a seasonal biological technician for the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management I used Oregon Flora constantly in doing surveys of sensitive plant species. As an independent botanical contractor Oregon Flora was one of my primary references. In the natural history of Oregon classes that I teach at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Southern Oregon University I have introduced Oregon Flora to scores of elders and citizen scientists.

Thus far, all the accomplishments of OregonFlora have been achieved without public funding. We learned last year that we may have reached the limits of grassroots funding for OregonFlora. Much of the work of OregonFlora was suspended because of lack of funds. Thankfully, the Native Plant Society of Oregon was able to donate a \$100,000.00 to keep OregonFlora going.

Oregon needs OregonFlora. HB 3173 will insure that all Oregonians can count on the future of this invaluable resource. Thank you for your support.

