

Submitter: Nancy Ahnert
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3173

I am a native plant enthusiast and gardener. I strongly support HB 3173 (Oregon Flora).

I have long admired the Oregon Flora Project for steadfastly refusing to charge for their information, thus keeping it available to all members of the public. Many volunteer hours have been put in to make this invaluable project happen. But the project has operated on a shoestring budget, at times struggling to stay afloat. It is time to help keep it going with state support.

As a member of the Native Plant Society of Oregon, I rely on the useful and useable information from OregonFlora, mainly plant identification and known locations, to both enhance my appreciation of the natural world and to share that with other Oregon residents. Beyond that, The OregonFlora database manages and shares ~1.5 million Oregon plant occurrence records through interactive mapping tools on its website. This comprehensive dataset is essential to understanding which plant communities might be vulnerable to climate change-induced events, and provides the core information needed to restore damaged landscapes. Understanding plant communities is important to keep those ecosystems healthy, which in turn supports timber, recreation, wildlife, and conservation.

I am grateful to live in a state that values its natural resources. Please support House Bill 3173 to ensure the resources of OregonFlora can continue to be maintained and developed for users statewide.