

February 1, 2025

To: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Re: HB 3173 (Oregon Flora) - SUPPORT

Dear Committee members:

We are writing in support of HB 3173, a bill to provide \$400,000 in biennial funding to the Oregon Flora Program at Oregon State University. This is a small price to pay for such a valuable resource and reference. We have been slowly restoring our small pocket of coastal forest to its natural state, and identifying invasive and native plants is a big part of any such undertaking. Oregon Flora is a tremendous information source for anyone interested in native Oregon plants, from amateur enthusiasts like us to professionals in the botanical sciences.

The reference materials produced by Oregon Flora to date are high quality and comprehensive, the online materials including plant identification tools and searchable plant databases are well organized and clearly presented, and the ongoing and future updates are indications of a program that meets and exceeds its mission to educate.

Grass lawns are the largest irrigated crop in the United States. Grass lawns certainly have their place, but mixing in a variety of native Oregon plants to an otherwise bland lawnscape can add beauty and provide habitat for native bugs, pollinators, and other critters. Or for those who are able, restoring their lawn or property to its native state can also be a rewarding project. Oregon Flora has information and resources for anyone interested in native plant landscaping.

Again, please support the Oregon Flora program and vote Yes on HB 3173

Thank you,

Eric & Christine Sherman

Depoe Bay, Oregon