



HANSEN NURSERY
P.O. Box 834
COQUILLE, OR 97423
541-297-3793

February 2, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: HB3173 to establish Oregon Flora in Statute and sustain funding

For business and personal reasons I have supported the OSU Oregon Flora Project financially and in other ways for many years. What has distressed me most about this very essential service to the nursery industry and to private citizens of Oregon is the lack of secure funding to carry on various education resources and updates increasingly essential to our ability to cope and to thrive in a rapidly changing climatic, ecological, demographic and social climate.

I access the Oregon Flora website frequently for numerous reasons. It is essential to properly identify the native plants I sell and to describe to my customers how and where to plant, what animals and insects rely on each plant, their uses as food for humans, and as a resource I can recommend to my customers. The photos of our natives and non-natives, locations, and current status of plant communities (i.e. endangered, watch list, etc.) are essential information needed to grow and use our natives. Water resources have become more scarce, temperatures are changing, diseases are decimating animals and plants alike. We can't educate the public and our customers if we don't have regular, updated information.

In the current political climate, with budgets slashed on a steady and increasing basis, we must support as a free service resources essential to our well-being and to the health of our citizens and to our physical resources.

For many years - in fact since I started the nursery in 1986 - I have struggled year after year to find information on how to source, let alone grow, our natives. Information was non-existent for years and what little I found came out of often desperate attempts to "pick the brains" of friends, gardeners and fellow nurserymen. It has only been the past 15 years or so that detailed information has very slowly become available. Bear in mind that Hitchcock and Cronquist's *Flora of the Pacific Northwest* was first published in **1973!** Fifty years without a new and comprehensive resource is nearly incomprehensible. In terms of plant identification and vague location, that was it until the Oregon Flora project began. So in all that time I relied on Hitchcock, et al and whatever field and hiking guides I could find, not the best resources for a professional nurseryman...

At least yearly updates are necessary, no, essential, for a number of reasons. New plants continue to be discovered, names change as more information is gained about individual plants, locations can change (plants die out in one or more areas due to changing conditions so they move around) or plants can disappear almost without notice. Updates on plant locations can give us warning if they are endangered, allowing us to protect and increase them.

And finally, the nursery industry, organizations such as the Native Plant Society of Oregon, Oregon Hardy Plant Society and others have worked for years to educate, promote and make available native plants. Respect for our environment, our animals, insects, plants and ourselves must be reinforced, taught in our schools and lived. Oregon Flora is just as important a resource as our physical and web-based libraries and information centers, our schools and universities and our government. To deny funding on a regular basis is to deny the people of Oregon a free resource we cannot do without.

Sincerely,

Robin L. Hansen

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robin@hansennursery.com