

Submitter: Christopher Earle

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3173

I am writing today as curator of the Gymnosperm Database, a global information database primarily addressing conifers; and also as a professional forest ecologist with over 40 years of experience in Pacific Northwest ecosystems, much of it providing expert support and consultation to the timber industry. I support adoption of HB 3173 for the following reasons. (1) Reliable, accurate information on the properties and distribution of native plants is essential for effective management and compliance with applicable regulations on forest and range lands across Oregon. In general, the Oregon Flora is the first source I turn to when searching for such information. (2) The Flora provides a valuable and unique resource regarding the ethnobotany of Oregon plants, i.e. how those plants have been used and named during Oregon's prehistoric and early historic periods. Almost no other states have such a resource. (3) Scientific research in the modern world depends upon long-term, sustainable relationships between multiple linked databases, most of them tied to universities or major national laboratories. The proposed infrastructure support for the Flora would help to establish Oregon as a nationally significant presence in natural resources management, particularly in areas touching upon timber resources. Thank you for your consideration.