

Submitter: Susan Mates

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3173

RE: HB 3173 - Support

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

I am writing to urge you to support HB3173 and the OregonFlora program.

OregonFlora is a critical resource for a broad spectrum of governmental agencies, businesses, educators, environmental enthusiasts, and curious Oregon residents. It is the only tool that definitively documents our state's botanic natural resources.

In my local volunteer work restoring natural areas, OregonFlora is important. The dichotomous keys it provides allow for precise plant identification and an authoritative reference. That is important in determining what is native and not native to Oregon, which is important in creating habitats that will effectively support our wildlife, create healthy and diverse plant environments, and prevent threats from invasive plants. Being able to correctly identify plant species is the crucial first step in knowing the conservation issues present in natural areas. The fact that is is freely shared data is invaluable, but it is vital to keep this information current and maintained.

These OregonFlora resources required thousands of hours of work and research by many dedicated people. Lacking sufficient funding for years has slowed the progress of completing the third and last volume of Flora of Oregon and has limited work on the website. In a state that where agriculture and forestry are economically dependent, this is a necessary resource that deserves secure funding.

Please do what you can to find funding for OFP and make it stable.

Thank you for your consideration,
Susan Mates