

February 4, 2025

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

Re: HB 3173 (Oregon Flora) - SUPPORT

Dear Committee members:

I am an outdoors enthusiast and native plant gardener and I strongly support HB 3173.

Oregon has 4,886 unique plant species that grow without cultivation. Of these, 70% are native species, and 120 are endemic and grow only in Oregon. The oregonflora.org website offers sophisticated search and plant identification tools, 1.48 million mappable plant occurrence records, 63,000+ color field photos, and fact sheets for every plant taxon.

Healthy and sustainable forests are critical for Oregon's economy. A forest supports many organisms besides timber-producing trees, and understanding the plant communities keeps those ecosystems healthy, which in turn supports timber, recreation, wildlife, and conservation.

Wildfire, drought, and rising temperatures are adversely impacting our lives and the land we live on. 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. Importantly, it provides the core information needed to restore damaged landscapes.

Oregon's economy depends upon its botanical resources. Healthy forests, productive rangelands, agricultural operations, outdoor recreation sites, and native plant horticultural businesses all need reliable data which OregonFlora provides.

The requested support will leverage 30 years of research, volunteer effort, and citizen science contributions to develop the OregonFlora resources. Sustainable support will help ensure it is maintained.

I urge your support of House Bill 3173 to ensure the resources of OregonFlora can continue to be maintained and developed for users statewide.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Collins  
Portland, OR 97211

