

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

Re: HB3173 SUPPORT

Dear committee,

The Native Plant Society of Oregon gives its full-throated support of HB3173, which would establish OregonFlora in statute and initiate a sustainable funding stream to maintain and continue the development of OregonFlora's dynamic dataset.

In 1994, OregonFlora's founder, the late Scott Sundberg, presented his vision of creating a new flora to the NPSO. He sought to partner with NPSO because he wanted a new Flora of Oregon to be relevant to residents statewide. He sought the participation of our organization's amateur botanists and plant enthusiasts, giving them the botanical tools that were available and engaging them to help create better ones. He charted a course that enhanced the scientific literacy of Oregonians, engaging the public in a scientific effort to create a modern legacy to one of Oregon's greatest treasures—its botanical diversity.

OregonFlora is taking a rigorous, scholarly path to prepare the new Flora of Oregon. Its information reflects the latest taxonomic research, which is the guideline for curating the many observations and field photos that are presented on the oregonflora.org website. Exacting database design and data management ensure that details from every plant occurrence record is captured and cross-referenced to accurately link scientific and common names, nativity, conservation status, and locality. This is a dynamic dataset that requires ongoing curation and updating, especially as we see profound shifts in plant communities due to wildfires, invasive species encroachment, and the impacts of climate change.

The modest financial request in HB3173 is a wise investment that will ensure that OregonFlora's 30 years of data development continues to serve natural resource managers throughout the state. It will leverage the many partnerships they have developed with state and federal agencies, herbaria, and organizations like the Native Plant Society. Their work strengthens and shares plant diversity data from many sources, making it accessible and relevant to all. OregonFlora is elevating the scientific literacy of Oregonians, which improves the liveability and ecological well-being of our state.

The Native Plant Society's mission—to support the enjoyment, conservation, and study of Oregon's native plants—is closely aligned with OregonFlora's mission to serve as a comprehensive resource about Oregon's vascular plant life. Sustainable support for OregonFlora will ensure that they can continue to help our program and many others access and apply information about the plants of our state.

We strongly recommend the committee support HB3173.

Sincerely,



Steven Yeager, NPSO President