

February 18, 2025

**To: Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water**  
**Subject: Support for \$4 Million in Water Equity Funding**

Co Chairs Helm and Owens, and members of the committee

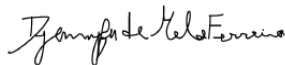
Our names are Djennyfer de Melo Ferreira and Sarah Walker, and we are writing on behalf of the Necanicum Watershed Council (NWC), an environmental nonprofit organization that has benefitted from the awarded Community Water Justice funds. We support HB 3528 as it is a critical step in addressing Oregon's water challenges for all Oregonians.

Thanks to funding from the Water Equity Fund, NWC has made significant strides building and codifying shoulder-to-shoulder relationships with tribal partners and indigenous stewards of the Necanicum Basin. With Community Water Justice support, NWC was able to hire a full-time Tribal Lands and Water Steward to act as a liaison with tribal partners, increase our capacity for communications, outreach and planning, and elevate tribal voices and knowledge in our restoration work. This funding has been critical to assist our Dias del Salmón programming to promote ecological education and outreach efforts to underserved communities, including Hispanic/Latinx children of the Oregon Coast, and served as a valuable liaison between NWC and Tribal partners. As just one example of their role in our regular restoration work, the Tribal Lands and Water Steward has contributed significantly to the restoration project that improves soil and water quality in a confluence of the Necanicum River, bringing traditional ecological knowledge of holistic planting needs for the site restoration, and leading a community planting day. This type of critical capacity support is rarely available to small non-profit environmental organizations but was essential to building reciprocity into our relationships with these communities.

We urge you to support HB 3528 and continue investing in water equity for all Oregonians.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,



Djennyfer de Melo Ferreira  
Stewardship and Restoration Director



Sarah Walker  
Executive Operations Director