



Joint Committee On Ways & Means, Subcommittee On Natural Resources
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and Levy and members of the Committee:

I'm writing on behalf of the Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network (OrCAN) to express strong support for \$5M in OWEB's budget, for renewal of the Natural and Working Lands (NWL) Fund. The Fund, which is included in the Governor's recommended budget at \$5M, provides incentives and technical support to help landowners, land managers, environmental justice communities, and Tribes adopt practices that support natural climate solutions on Oregon's natural and working lands, including farms and ranches.

In addition to our support, *twenty-five farms, ranches, vineyards and agricultural businesses have endorsed the NWL funding request.* See the list of endorsing producers below.

The NWL Fund invests in *existing* programs and projects within state agencies, including programs that existed in statute without funding. Among other things, this funding launched the State's new grant program providing payment for agricultural practices with ecosystem services including carbon sequestration, water quality and habitat benefits.

Continuity of this funding is critical! When funding is available one year and not the next, interest in the programs decreases, and it becomes difficult for farmers and community organizations to anticipate what will be available and take best advantage of it.

Farms and ranches are on the front lines of climate change. The same agricultural practices that mitigate climate change help farms and ranches be more resilient to climate impacts by managing wildfire risk, improving water infiltration and storage, increasing biodiversity, and protecting crops against pests and diseases.

We urge you to support the inclusion of the \$5M investment in the NWL Fund in OWEB's budget for the 2025-2027 biennium.

We also support inclusion of the Climate Resiliency staff position proposed in OWEB's budget, and included in the Governor's Recommended Budget. This position is leading engagement with communities and Tribes on how best to utilize and distribute OWEB's NWL Funds, and has been instrumental in collaboration with other implementing agencies.

We are also supportive of, and urge your support for, the request for funding the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) in OWEB's budget. OAHP protects working ranch and farmlands for their agriculture and natural resource values through four grant programs including conservation easements and conservation management plan grants.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests, and for your service.

Megan Kemple, Executive Director
Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network

Farms, ranches and vineyards endorsing Natural and Working Lands Fund request

Banyan Botanicals, Ashland
Belle Mare Farm, Willamina
Cooper Mountain Vineyards, Beaverton
Elderberry Wisdom Farm, Salem
Flying Stag Lodge, Government Camp
Food with Thought, Bend
Garnetts Red Prairie Farm, Sheridan
Good Rain Farm, Troutdale
Hope Well Wine, Sheridan
Humming Bee Nursery, Corvallis
Joy Ridge Farm, Corvallis
Knudsen Vineyards, Dundee
Labishire Homestead Commons, Salem
La Creole Orchards, Dallas
Miller Family Ranch, Bandon
Nella Mae's Farm, LLC, Cove
Rainbow Acres Community Farm, Cottage Grove
Rietmann Ranch, Condon
Small is Beautiful, Eugene
Stoneboat Farm, Hillsboro
Upriver Organics, Leaburg
Valley Flora Farm, Langlois
Winter Green Farm, Noti
Willow-Witt Ranch LLC, Ashland