



February 26, 2025

Joint Subcommittee on Ways and Means Natural Resources Subcommittee  
Regarding the Natural and Working Lands (NWL) Fund

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and Levy and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Natural Resources Subcommittee:

Climate Reality Project, Portland Chapter is writing to express our strong support for \$5M in OWEB's budget for renewal of the Natural and Working Lands Fund. This critically important fund 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.

As an organization committed to environmental justice and public health, we support natural climate solutions that have economic, social, and health benefits for Oregon's communities. These solutions remove carbon from the atmosphere and store it in our natural and working lands. They help increase ecosystem resilience by reducing wildfire risk and improving the health of our waterways. These benefits give the stewards of our lands tools to deal with increasingly erratic and extreme weather that leads to floods, heat domes and fires.

The NWL Fund invests in *existing* programs and projects at four natural resource agencies, including the Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. These existing programs need the boost provided by the current \$5M budget proposal to keep those programs moving forward. These programs are popular with landowners, managers, and community organizations already taking nature-based climate action on their farms, rangelands, forestlands, wetlands and estuaries. In its first two years, the initial \$10M fund has leveraged \$9M in Federal investments with the potential for more. The NWL Fund fills critical investment gaps in nature-based climate action, action that reflects Oregon's values and commitment to our green environment.

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

Thank you,

Karen Harrington  
Climate Reality, Portland Chapter

### About the Climate Reality Project Portland Chapter

The Climate Reality Project (CRP) Portland Chapter is a local, volunteer-led chapter of The Climate Reality Project, an international nonprofit of 5 million members led by climate leader and former US Vice President Al Gore, whose mission is to catalyze global solutions to the climate crisis. Our legislative committee bases its advocacy on CRP's 5 pillars: a just transition to clean energy, zero carbon transportation, climate justice and public health, green communities, and a fair, representative democracy. [climaterealitypdx.com/](http://climaterealitypdx.com/).