



**Tualatin Soil and Water**  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Conservation is for everyone.

The Honorable Lew Frederick, Chair  
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem Oregon 97301

March 17, 2025

Re: Public Testimony for SB 576

Dear Chair Frederick and Members of the Committee:

We are writing in support of SB 576, that appropriates funding for Japanese beetle eradication. If passed, this bill will declare an emergency for the current Japanese beetle outbreak in the Bonny Slope area of Washington County, as well as raise crucial funding for the control of the destructive agricultural pests. Japanese beetles voraciously consume a wide variety of crops—most of which are essential to Oregon's agricultural and nursery sectors, and these pests are currently poised to explode out of the infestation's epicenter in the Bonny Slope area to the rest of the Willamette Valley, and then across Oregon.

The West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District (WMSWCD) and Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District (TSWCD) are public service districts dedicated to the conservation of soil and water resources for people, wildlife and the environment. WMSWCD's service territory includes Multnomah County west of the Willamette River, Sauvie Island, and a portion of the Tualatin Mountains known as Bonny Slope. TSWCD's service territory includes all of Washington County. One of our priority conservation goals for both organizations is the prevention, early detection-rapid response, and management and control of invasive species. By definition, invasive species are those introduced plants, pathogens, insects and aquatic organisms that spread rapidly due to a lack of biological controls and their spread leads to ecological, economic and social harm to people and the environment.

We work closely with agriculture and forest landowners and lead watershed-level restoration projects. Japanese beetles can destroy crops, fruits, grass sod and nursery stock. To date, the Japanese beetle control effort has shown very promising results, but continued control measures are necessary to achieve eradication. Oregon Dept of Agriculture administers this control program and received emergency funding from the Oregon Invasive Species Council for their 2025 treatment season. However, these funds have already been expended and general fund monies are essential to continue funding the next round of control. Eradication has been possible in other states such as Utah, and these requested funds are crucial to protecting the investments that Oregon has already made.

Without the funding allocation proposed in SB 576, Japanese beetle control efforts will cease and these insect pests will quickly move throughout the Willamette Valley and beyond—potentially devastating the agricultural and nursery industries with costly quarantines, damage to crops and stock, and significant financial losses. We need to act quickly to clamp down on this infestation to protect the resources and industries vital to Oregon.

Please give full consideration to passing SB 576.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "TPRiggsby".

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lacey M Townsend".

Terri Preeg Riggsby, Chair and Zone 5 Director, WMSWCD and Lacey Townsend, Executive Director, TSWCD (on behalf of TSWCD Board)

cc: West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Directors

cc: Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors