



March 20, 2025

Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources

900 Court Street NE

Salem, OR 97301

RE: Statement of Support for the Oregon Department of State Land's 2025-2027 Budget

Dear Committee Members:

This letter is to share The Wetlands Conservancy's support for the 2025-2027 Governor's Budget for the Department of State Lands (DSL). The Wetlands Conservancy works closely with the Department of State Lands and strongly believes that their work is crucial to the preservation of wetlands in Oregon, which benefit humans and wildlife in every corner of the state. This budget is important to continue this quality work and provide much needed staff capacity to carry it out efficiently.

Federal protections for wetlands have been greatly reduced, making the role of DSL and the strong state protections they enforce even more vital to wetland conservation in Oregon. DSL's role in Oregon's no net loss of wetlands state conservation goal is paramount in ensuring compliance.

We greatly support POP 201 – Protecting Wetlands and Waterways - which increases capacity for DSL to better manage wetlands and waterways. The Wetlands Conservancy works closely with DSL on a number of wetland conservation and mitigation projects and improved efficiency would allow more projects to occur, benefiting the landscape greatly. The pressures on wetlands continue to rise from increased development, the housing crisis, and climate change and wetlands are key to a climate resilient Oregon; providing protection from sea level rise on the Oregon coast, increased ground water in the Klamath basin, wildfire breaks across Oregon, and water filtration in our urban areas to just name a few.

The Wetlands Conservancy also enthusiastically supports POP 203 and POP 206 which are in support of South Slough Estuarine Reserve, a significant ecological region. In addition, the education, research, and community engagement that takes place is incredibly valuable in informing the public about the value of wetlands and the best management practices.

In closing, The Wetlands Conservancy urges the committee to fully fund these essential initiatives within the Governor's budget. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Katie Ryan
Executive Director