

March 25, 2025

Attention: Chair Jama and Committee Members
Senate Committee on Rules

RE: SJR 28 – Natural Resource Protection

Actions in the past few days prompt me to ask for your support to send this issue to the voters.

The Ways and Means Co-chairs' framework for the budget shows a cut to the natural resource agencies of 30%. These agencies already receive less than 3% of the state's budget. To manage our natural resources productively we need to have staff support and tools to do so. Our natural resource agencies have been significantly underfunded for decades.

The federal withdrawal of support is just one more nail in the coffin of providing the support we need for our natural resources both for now and in the future.

Normally I would want to leave this action to the legislature and stakeholders. But the reality today precludes that option. We need further direction so let us have the public vote and determine how important they feel our natural resources are to Oregon.

Further, I wish something could be done about capping the number of bills we see during the session. It was ridiculous to see 3400+ bills entered into the system with one legislator offering up over 300 alone. It is hard for the legislators to do the necessary work, directing policy and funding, with the current unlimited bill entry structure.

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