



High Desert Horticultural Center

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Oregon State Legislature
Joint Ways & Means Committee

Re: HB 5006; Funding for Oregon Flora at Oregon State University

April 15, 2025

Dear Joint Ways & Means Committee,

I'm writing in support of providing funding for OregonFlora at Oregon State University through HB 5006. As the founder and director of a 501(c)(3) non-profit working to promote native plants in urban landscapes and natural areas, I and my staff use the Flora as an essential resource critical to our central mission. The Flora provides the definitive reference to the state's native vegetation for our work and our members and supporters.

But the Flora is not only a reference of plant material. The continued work by Linda Hardison and her staff ensure accurate descriptions, geographic range, and a wealth of additional information about the native flora of the state and its role in helping municipalities reduce resource dependency and reach conservation targets, one of our primary goals. Without the Flora, gathering this information for use in urban planning and management would be nearly impossible.

Our members have been financial supporters of the Oregon Flora since the early 2000's. The two volumes that have been completed to date have been funded primarily through donations and contributions. However, the work has always been completed on a shoe-string budget. Private donations and volunteer labor have barely kept the Flora alive, and can no longer support the rising costs associated with maintaining the massive database of Oregon's native vegetation, updating the records, and developing resources to make the Flora increasingly valuable to planners, architects, contractors, and researchers.

OregonFlora is a unique resource essential to the native plant industry and the public. With an increasing awareness and interest in native plants as climate solutions, we must establish and support efforts to provide crucial information for our own future. The OregonFlora is an outstanding resource that does just that.

- Keeping OregonFlora a cutting-edge resource for a modest investment of \$400K/biennium will leverage decades of knowledge and work that agencies and businesses do not have the time, financial resources, nor expertise to complete. The need for these resources will undoubtedly increase as time goes on.
- Plant diversity information (like mapping information and taxonomy) is always changing and the dataset needs ongoing stewardship to remain effective. This bill will allow OregonFlora's 31 year investment in data management and sharing to continue, providing uninterrupted support for its diverse stakeholders across government, businesses, education, and residents throughout the state, and establish Oregon as a leader in responsible and effective management of state resources.

I strongly urge you to provide funding to support OregonFlora through HB 5006 and preserve the Flora as an indispensable resource for the state of Oregon. Thank you.

s/ Richard Martinson, Ph.D.