

TO: Oregon House Rules Committee

I support SB 547A, which would designate April as Oregon's Native Plant Appreciation month.

Oregon has over 3400 native plant species, including 120 species that are found only in Oregon. Native plants are important to Oregon for several reasons:

1. **Biodiversity:** By preserving native plants, we help protect the diversity of Oregon's natural habitats. Native plants support native insects, birds, and other animals, building a strong foundation for healthy ecosystems.
2. **Ecological Balance:** Native plants play a crucial role in maintaining the balance of local ecosystems by providing food, shelter, and nesting sites for local animals. Native plants have evolved to be well-suited to the area's soil and climate.
3. **Water Conservation:** Native plants generally require less water, fertilizers, and pesticides than non-native species. This makes them more sustainable, particularly in areas where water conservation is important.
4. **Cultural Significance:** Native plants are often integral to Oregon's indigenous cultures, providing resources for food, medicine, and traditional crafts. Preserving these plants honors the heritage and practices of Native American communities in the region.
5. **Aesthetic and Historical Value:** Many of Oregon's native plants are visually striking, adding to the region's natural beauty. They also help maintain historical landscapes, giving a sense of place and identity to the state.
6. **Economy:** Native trees, especially the Douglas fir, Western redcedar, and Western hemlock, are the backbone of the timber and construction industries.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Respectfully,

Susan Dornfeld