

Natural Resources Lobby Budget Priorities 2025 Legislative Session

Policy bill requests we support:

HB 3103 Requires ODF to produce a sustainable harvest level on state forestlands every ten years, or sooner if there is a material change in management.

HB 3657 Creates a wildlife damage prevention and compensation fund and pilot program at ODA to offer critical relief for farmers and ranchers suffering losses due to wildlife damage.

HB 3826 - Invests \$2M in workforce pipeline for CDL training.

SB 94 Creates a pilot program at ODOT to increase weight allowance on certain routes for trucks carrying milk. Would bring alignment with Washington and Idaho and reduce infrastructure and emissions impacts.

SB 576 Provides funding for ODA's Japanese beetle eradication program. Outbreaks continue, and a lack of investment now will only lead to increased costs in future years as populations grow and spread and damage impacts our agriculture and nursery sectors.

SB 771 – Directs Oregon Business Development Department to develop and administer a program for awarding grants to rodeo organizations based in communities with a population of 12,000 or less to fund certain capital projects on existing rodeo property.

SB 779 Provides funding to Oregon State University for the AgriStress Helpline, a suicide prevention helpline for agricultural workers established in 2023.

SB 785 – Invests \$1M for the Ag Educator Scholarship Program through HECC.

SB 976 – If the equine dentistry portion of the bill is removed, the bill would allow an individual to verify whether cattle are pregnant without holding a valid license issued by the Oregon State Vet Medical Examining Board under certain circumstances.

SB 985 Provides funding for Wolf Management Compensation Fund at ODA, providing compensation to offset damages incurred by wolf depredation on livestock.

SB 1019 Makes important changes to funding for ODA's livestock brand inspection program at ODA, equalizing the fee structure between dairy, cattle, and feedlot owners.

SB 5531 POP 101 (Lower Columbia River Dredging) and POP 102 (Port Capital Improvement) for Oregon Business Development Department. Both packages ensure the continued viability and competitiveness of our agricultural exports through Terminal 6 at the Port of Portland.

Agency Budget Priorities

SB 5002 – ODA Budget

Key areas of **support**:

- Project OneODA Modernization
- Continued federal partnership programs including Avian influenza protection, Specialty Crop Block Grant program and FSMA education.

We have concerns about the **proposed cut to the USDA Wildlife Services Program**. This program provides essential protection for livestock producers and rural communities. Shifting these costs to counties or landowners will have disproportionate impacts on already resource-strained rural economies. **\$545,660 GF is needed to sustain this program.**

We are also concerned about the discontinuation of several one-time investments from the 2023–25 biennium, which provided critical support to producers, rural communities, and infrastructure development:

- \$5.5 million – Agricultural Workforce Housing (HB 2001, 2023)
- \$1 million – Wolf Depredation Compensation Grants
- \$9 million – Meat Infrastructure Grants (HB 3410, 2023)
- \$1.2 million – Vine Mealybug and Invasive Species Management
- \$980,000 – Japanese Beetle Eradication Efforts

Removing these investments now, particularly for pest and invasive species management efforts, will likely cost Oregonians much more over the longer term.

Finally, the proposed elimination of the Economic Development Policy and Operations Specialist position further reduces the state's capacity to support agricultural trade and market development. At a time when Oregon agriculture is increasingly dependent on global markets, the ability to compete internationally is not just a return on investment — it is a strategic imperative.

HB 5009- ODF&W Budget

As part of the Private Forest Accord agreement, add \$20,000,000 in GF to the ODF&W budget for PFA mitigation grant fund, which benefits fish and aquatic species and habitats.

SB 5521- ODF Budget

Appropriates to ODF \$10,000 for the small forestland grant program ("SFISH") and \$6,000,000 for the Adaptive Management Program, both of which were created as part of the Private Forest Accord agreement.

SB 5525 - OSU Statewides

Provides funding for important statewide programs that support economic, environmental and social vitality in Oregon. In the 2025-27 biennium, the OSU Statewides seek a \$23.5 million increase to sustain current operations, bolster capacity to meet critical needs in core mission areas, and make strategic investments to support community and state economic development (\$17.5M Base funding increase, additional \$6M for strategic investments).

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Budget requests not needed

HB 2803 Significant increase to water transaction fees paid to OWRD just to maintain current service level. GF contributions are needed to fill this deficit rather than putting the burden of the Department's fiscal shortfall onto water users.

HB 2806: Increases statutory fee caps for weights and measures (ODA) by 30%, allowing two 10% fee hikes and continued annual adjustments up to 3%. While we understand the importance of maintaining reserves, we question the rationale for these fee increases when critical programs — such as housing, predator control, and compensation grants — are being phased out or defunded. The general fund should be funding more of these core programs to avoid burdening an already overburdened sector with increased fees.

HB 2809: Raises statutory cap on pesticide registration fees paid to ODA's Pesticide Program. Before fee increases are considered, evaluate current allocations. Many efficiencies and program adjustments could easily achieve significant savings. We would like to see a return of 50% GF support for the Pesticide Analytical and Response Center (PARC), and a reduction to the fee and GF support for the Pesticide Stewardship Partnership based on significant unaddressed concerns around program and data management.

HB 2947 Initiates study of agricultural soils and crops where biosolids have been applied to test for PFAS levels. This project is best funded through peer-reviewed processes where the goals, methods, and results can be objectively evaluated.

HB 3106 Continues funding for a state agency "water data portal." This project has already received significant state investment but based on a variety of issues outlined in opposition testimony, the project has not made significant progress. More stakeholder consultation is needed before proceeding. It will also benefit from having a neutral host and convener, such as Oregon State University.

SB 887 Funds an Organic Policy Specialist position for ODA. There is no need for a specific policy specialist for organic producers, particularly given the very small proportion of organic production in the state (~1% of total). New investments in agency capacity should serve the industry more broadly, and organic policy issues are already addressed with existing capacity.