



April 2023

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



MID-SESSION OVERVIEW

The 2023 Oregon Legislative Session has just passed the halfway mark, and with a relatively bipartisan start to session, things are already getting more contentious. The first three months of session, the Legislature and Governor focused on building bipartisan proposals to address housing as well as retain and recruit semiconductor manufacturing. Over \$400 million dollars total has now been allocated to those two initiatives. The passage of those bills opened the door for more partisan issues and procedural wrangling. As we approached the April 4th deadline for committees to pass (or kill) bills, the Legislature took up a larger share of partisan or difficult issues. Republicans in both chambers are now requiring bills to be read on the floor, which has slowed work down significantly.

Procedural tools are not the only thing that may throw a wrench in the second half of the session. On May 27th, state economists will deliver their final revenue forecast of the biennium, setting the parameters for the new budget (developing a balanced budget is the only task the legislature is required to complete). Legislative leadership and the powerful Ways & Means Co-Chairs will be carefully watching to determine how much wiggle room there is for new programs or bills. If the forecast is down, Democrats may need Republican support to tap into state reserves - the "Rainy Day Fund." And any new programs or bills requiring state funds will have a harder time reaching the Governor's desk.



OFS Executive Director Katie Murray, Dr. Dani Lightle from OSU, and Scott Setniker from Setniker Farms before testifying on HB 2610 in February 2023.

As we approach the June 25th deadline for the session to adjourn, OFS will continue shepherding bills we support, as well as coordinating with allies and legislative champions to stop the bills that would negatively impact our members. We are also working closely to elevate our budget priorities across state natural resource agencies.

Below you will find a summary of the bills we tracked that died, and those that we will continue to advocate on throughout the session.

YOUR OFS STAFF:



Katie Murray
Executive Director



Tiffany Monroe
Associate Director
of Policy & Outreach



Diann Washburn
Office Manager

LEGISLATIVE CONSULTANT:



Rocky Dallum
Tonkon Torp

REGIONAL GRASSROOTS COORDINATORS:



Pami Monnette
Lane County



Jenny Johnson
Clatsop County

OFS WELCOMES TWO NEW REGIONAL GRASSROOTS COORDINATORS!

We are pleased to welcome two new members to the OFS Team this year. Pami Monnette and Jenny Johnson are our two new Regional Grassroots Coordinators who will be working to support grassroots work at the county level.

Pami is working with Lane Families for Farms and Forests and building connections across Lane county. Pami is a small farmer with 10+ years' experience working for Oregon State University Extension. Jenny Johnson will start next month supporting Clatsop Working Watersheds Cooperative and expanding connections in Clatsop county. Jenny has a strong forestry background having worked for the Oregon Department of Forestry for 16 years. We are thrilled to have such depth of expertise and community connections added to the OFS Team!

WATCH BILLS THAT DIED

HB 2655 – Establishes new requirements concerning aquaculture practices; would restrict innovations like genetic engineering. **Died without a hearing.**

HB 2648 – Creates “Independent Science Review Board.” **Died without a hearing.**

SB 89 – Aquaculture study bill, became a vehicle for restrictions on tools and technology. **Died in Committee after one hearing.**

SB 87 – Adds five Extension positions and initiates market analysis serving only Oregon’s small-scale, organic producers. **Died without a hearing.**

SB 526 – Requests state funds to reimburse growers for costs related to organic market certification and transition. **Died without a hearing.**

SB 544 – Establishes new program for source reduction of single use plastics; sets goals for 25% reductions from 2023 levels by 2030. **Died in Committee after two hearings.**

SB 525 - Prohibition on emissions from small nonroad engines beginning in 2026. **Died without a hearing.**

SB 617 – Requires Oregon Department of Agriculture to hire and maintain an organic policy special assistant to the Director. **Died without a hearing.**

SB 1059 – Study bill on policies concerning organic agriculture. **Died without a hearing.**

BILLS WE ARE STILL WATCHING

HB 2610 – Invests \$1 million in Oregon State University’s IR-4 Program to research new, reduced-risk pest management tools for Oregon’s specialty crop growers. Currently in Ways & Means. **This proactive concept was submitted by OFS.**

HB 2647 – Appropriates over \$1.27 million over two biennia to Department of Environmental Quality and Oregon Health Authority to develop a program for monitoring and solutions to Harmful Algal Blooms. Currently in Ways & Means.

HB 2687 – Authorizes ODA to issue public applicator licenses to employees of federally recognized Tribes for land management on adjacent lands. Passed out of House, currently in Senate.

HB 2998 – Creates a Soil Health Initiative and provides grants for voluntary implementation of soil health practices. Passed with amendments requested by OFS. Currently in Ways & Means.

AG-PAC EDUCATIONAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION



WHAT IS AG-PAC?

AG-PAC represents the interest of agriculture, forestry, and natural resource based industries and provides a voice in the legislative process by helping elect candidates and secure appointments for those who believe natural resource communities are essential to the economic vitality of Oregon.

Last month, the OFS team helped host a Legislative Reception along with other members of Ag-PAC Educational Services Association (AESA). We want to say a special thank you to OFS Office Manager Diann Washburn and OFS Board Vice-Chair Tami Kerr for all of the planning and organization that went into making this event a success. We welcomed over 90 guests at the reception, including legislators, state agency and university leaders, and representatives from AESA member organizations. Thanks to all twenty of the AESA member organizations for supporting this event! It was a great turnout and an important opportunity for connecting with policy makers and other leaders.

THANK YOU to the following AESA Member Organizations:

Associated Oregon Hazelnut Industry	Oregon Association of Nurseries	Oregon Seed Council
Associated Oregon Loggers	Oregon Cattlemen’s Association	Oregon Water Resources Congress
Far West Agribusiness Association	Oregon Dairy Farmers Association	Oregon Wheat Growers League
Hawley Land and Cattle	Oregon Dairy Women	Oregon Wine Council
National Pork Producers Council	Oregon Farm Bureau	Oregon Women for Agriculture
NW Ag Cooperative Council	Oregon Golf Course Superintendents Association	Oregon Women in Timber
NW Chicken Council		Oregonians for Food and Shelter

HB 3019 – Makes significant cuts to the Oregon Forest Resources Institute and redirects funds to “environmental literacy” and other new efforts. Currently in House Committee on Revenue.

SB 789 – Permanently restricts canola production in the Willamette Valley to only 500 acres. Awaiting Senate vote.

HB 3098 – Creates a new Farmworker Outreach Program for Oregon Department of Agriculture to provide education to farmworkers on pesticide safety and incident reporting. Currently in Ways & Means. **This proactive concept was submitted by OFS.**

HB 3124 – Comprehensive drought package. Currently in Rules Committee awaiting further amendments.

HB 3207 – Requires private labs to report well testing results to Department of Environmental Quality, for well testing conducted as part of real estate transactions. Adds data to a publicly accessible tool. Currently in Ways & Means.

HB 3244 – Funds an analysis of the economic competitiveness of Oregon’s agricultural sector and considers drought, heat, wildfire, climate, water, labor, and regulatory burdens. Currently in Ways & Means.

HB 5002 – Oregon Department of Agriculture Budget. Currently in Ways & Means.

HB 3343 – Study bill relating to groundwater; -1 amendment would have created a new Ground Water Quality Advisory Committee and fund an external evaluation of DEQ’s groundwater management program. Bill passed with a -3 amendment to address well repairs. Awaiting House vote.

SB 85 – Restricts new or expanded Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) pending full review of potential negative impacts by Oregon state agencies. Amendments would limit restriction to Tier 2 poultry operations. Currently in Rules Committee. (additional vehicle for this, SB 398 also in Rules).

SB 426 – Makes Oregon Department of Education responsible for providing technical assistance to Oregon school districts on pest management plans (this is currently – and more appropriately - provided by Oregon State University’s School IPM Program). Currently in Ways & Means.

SB 458 – Funding for Oregon State University Statewide Programs. Currently in Ways & Means.

SB 530 – Sets new state policies regarding “natural climate solutions.” Establishes “Natural and Working Lands Fund” to provide incentives and financial assistance to landowners; establishes Working Lands Advisory Committee. Awaiting Senate vote.

BILLS WE ARE STILL WATCHING CONTINUED...

SB 899 – Appropriates \$480,000 to the Oregon Invasive Species Council to increase outreach, education, and coordination across agencies and organizations. Currently in Ways & Means.

SB 955 – Creates AgriStress Helpline for Oregon to address mental health needs of Oregon's agricultural workers. Currently in Ways & Means.

SB 1058 – an expected vehicle to house recommendations from state-funded economic analysis for Oregon's organic sector. Currently in Rules Committee.

SJR 7 – Would amend Constitution to declare constitutional right to subsist, including right to save and exchange seeds (this would conflict with federal seed patent laws for patented plant varieties). Currently in Rules Committee, has not had a hearing.

AG MEETING WITH GOVERNOR KOTEK



OFS Executive Director Katie Murray joined ag coalition partners this week in a meeting with Governor Tina Kotek. We summarized several key points including the need for research, education, and technical support across the complex ag sector, the need to meaningfully engage rural and natural resource communities, and the importance of stakeholder involvement and rural perspectives in Governor appointments, from agency heads to boards and commissions. We emphasized our commitment to partnering with her as she works on issues related to Oregon's natural resource sector.

REMAINING 2023 LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

May 5th - Deadline to Post Work Session

May 19th - Deadline for Chairs to Schedule Work Session for 2nd Chamber Measures

June 25th - Constitutional Sine Die

CONTRIBUTE TO OFS AND HELP US ADVOCATE FOR YOU

Here's how you can support OFS: If you are not currently a member – Please **JOIN or CONTRIBUTE TODAY!** If you are already a member, please consider increasing your level of support. Help our coalition stand strong for Oregon!

We accept contributions any time of year. To contribute or for membership information, contact Diann Washburn: diann@ofsonline.org



OFS BLOG

Oregonians for Food & Shelter is passionate about our state's natural resources sectors, and we want everyone to learn about them! We welcome you to check out Oregonians for Food & Shelter's [Growing Oregon Blog](#) where we share impactful stories and produce compelling content related to farming, forestry, and related industries.

GRASSROOTS STRONG



UPCOMING TOURS

A successful tour can help educate the public, community influencers, and lawmakers about understanding your industry. Together, ongoing advocacy efforts can affect resources and policies critical for your industry and community. Several OFS supported grassroots groups are hosting tours within their counties.

Tillamook Working Lands and Waters Cooperative:
"It's About the Water Tour" for Associated Oregon Counties' newly elected Commissioners. Dinner reception on May 21st, followed by a tour on May 22nd.

Partnership for Lincoln Lands and Waters:
Sustaining our Future through Innovation tour for local leaders on May 23rd.

Lane Families for Farms and Forests
Water Quality Tour from a working lands perspective in the McKenzie Watershed, June 1st.

GRASSROOTS SPOTLIGHT



Congratulations to Clatsop Working Watersheds Cooperative (CWWC) for an incredibly successful Natural Resources and Awards Dinner. CWWC, in partnership with the Clatsop Chapter of Oregon Women in Timber, honored local heroes in the fishing, forestry, and farming sectors and **raised over \$150,000**, divided between seven youth natural resources programs in the county. We look forward to seeing how this event positively impacts the community in the coming years.

CURRENT INITIATIVE PETITIONS

INITIATIVE PETITION 3 - STATEWIDE

OFS has been following two initiative petitions this year. IP3 is a proposed ballot initiative for the 2024 statewide general election. The initiative would amend Oregon Revised Statutes related to animal care. The proposal is far-reaching and would criminalize commercial and recreational hunting, fishing, and trapping, pest control, and a wide array of animal husbandry practices including breeding and of course the harvesting of animals for food. With the exception of self-defense or veterinary care, any actions that would involve the intentional death of an animal would become a criminal offense. This proposal would have devastating impacts to Oregon's livestock sector and our state's food security. We will continue to work on education around this petition.

WATERSHED BILL OF RIGHTS - LANE COUNTY

We have also been tracking a county-level petition, the Lane county Watershed Bill of Rights. We saw a similar petition put forward in 2019 which did not gain traction. The petition aims to "establish legal rights for watersheds" and would allow any private citizen of Lane County to enforce these new rights free of "any interference from corporations, governments, or business entities." The petition would develop a new system of fines and enforcement that would supersede existing state and federal laws and permitting programs. Any citizen could privately enforce this new system without regard for existing laws, regulations, or private property rights. OFS will continue to track this petition and educate community members on its impacts.