



Oregon State Grange

August 21, 2003

The Honorable Greg Walden
U.S. House of Representatives
1404 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Walden,

On behalf of the nearly 10,000 Grange members from Oregon, I would like to express our gratitude for your efforts to reform the Endangered Species Act, ESA and to let you know that the Oregon State Grange strongly supports the legislation, "Sound Science for Endangered Species Act Planning Act of 2003", H.R. 1662.

Over the past years, farmers and ranchers in the Klamath River Basin have filed for bankruptcy, the entire community has suffered economic and social harm and millions of wild animals that rely on the secondary flow of irrigation water to provide habitat and food in the region have struggled from a man-made lack of water. Since the Northern Spotted Owl was officially listed as threatened in 1990, entire rural towns have disappeared and the economic livelihood of millions of Oregonians has vanished because of a single owl.

The Oregon State Grange has encouraged the Oregon Congressional Delegation to amend the Endangered Species Act (ESA) that "creates a priority for the economic health of communities and the preservation of all native species and, that the decisions declaring the status of any species be made on science that has been peer-reviewed by the National Science Foundation". The Oregon State Grange policy developed by the membership is very specifically related to how a species would be included and the process for regulation to address the specific situation. Our members look to this legislation as a breath of fresh air for past legislation that crippled the economy of Oregon.

Again, our members thank you for your efforts to improve the ESA and are prepared to provide additional support to ensure the passage of H.R. 1662.

Sincerely,

John M. Fine, Master/President
Oregon State Grange

America's Family Fraternity