Oregon
Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Agriculture
635 Capitol St NE
Salem, OR 97301-2532

August 27, 2018

The Honorable Senator Peter Courtney, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Tina Kotek, Co-Chair
State Emergency Board
900 Court Street NE
H-178 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301-4048

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

Nature of the Request
The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) requests permission to appear before the September meeting of the Emergency Board for the purpose of securing emergency funding for the eradication of the Gypsy moth infestation in the City of Corvallis.

The estimated eradication cost for the remainder of the 2017-19 biennium is $645,125, which includes $249,522 in-kind contribution from ODA. A combination of federal and state funding is needed to fully fund this request and the state amount is dependent on the amount of federal funding that the department is able to secure from the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS). In the past, Gypsy moth eradication costs were matched by the USDA. Our intent is to submit a 50:50 cost share request to the FY2019 Farm Bill Section 10007. Approval of Farm Bill suggestions depends upon available funds. ODA is requesting up to $395,603 General Fund, dependent upon the Federal Funds contribution, and would request permission to appear at a subsequent meeting of the Emergency Board once the federal resources are secured. The department is also requesting three limited duration seasonal survey biotechnicians (0.75 FTE).

Preparation activities for the Gypsy moth eradication will start in October 2018. Aerial treatments with a biological control agent, *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki*, (Btk), an organically approved biocontrol insecticide, will occur in April and May of 2019. It is important to secure commitments for funding as soon as possible, so implementation efforts can begin after the first of the year.

Agency Action/Background
The Department maintains a high-level detection program for Gypsy moth, *Lymantria dispar*, and its Asian strain (Asian Gypsy moth), which is funded by federal funds. Each year approximately 18,000 traps are placed statewide to detect any new introductions of this important invasive pest. The Department has conducted numerous very successful Gypsy moth eradication programs since 1981. The Department first detected Gypsy moths in Oregon in 1979 in Lake Oswego. Several dozen infestations have been detected since. The largest was in 1984-5 when over

19,000 moths were caught in Lane County. The biological insecticide Btk is used to eradicate any Gypsy moth infestations found. Btk is applied to all foliage either by helicopter or by ground equipment depending on the size and terrain in the eradication area. Foliage treated with Btk must first be ingested by the caterpillar. Btk disrupts the caterpillar's digestive system and causes a bacterial infection. Caterpillars generally stop eating and die within several days. Btk is effective only on caterpillars and does not accumulate in the environment. Public health monitoring studies have shown no adverse health effects of Btk in areas where it has been used. The Department pioneered the use of Btk to combat that infestation; a quarter of a million acres were sprayed over several years in the largest successful Gypsy moth eradication program anywhere. These have ranged from large-scale aerial application programs of 225,000 acres in the mid-1980s to small ground application programs of ten acres. Early detection of new introductions has allowed eradication programs to remain small and cost less, a benefit for Oregonians.

Gypsy moth caterpillars are one of the most destructive tree defoliators in the US. They prefer oak but will eat hundreds of species of trees and shrubs, including conifers. The caterpillars have defoliated millions of acres of trees and shrubs in the northeastern United States. When the caterpillars eat the leaves of broad-leaf trees year after year the trees become weak. These trees become susceptible to disease, fire, and erosion, and may provide poor habitat for other forms of animal and plant life. Fir trees can die after just one year if the caterpillars strip all of the needles. Not only do they strip trees and shrubs of foliage, the caterpillars can become a nuisance to people when they crawl on sidewalks, patios, houses, and other structures. They can also create a continuous and audible rain of messy droppings under infested trees. In some cases, people develop an allergy to the hairs of the gypsy moth larvae.

By finding Gypsy moths as soon as possible and quickly eliminating breeding populations, the Department has successfully prevented economic and environmental losses to Oregon, either by restrictive quarantines on commodities or by the loss of foliage and even trees due to expanding Gypsy moth populations.

If established, the Gypsy moth could cause considerable direct damage to many of Oregon's top forest commodities as well as urban and rural environments, increased production costs and potential for environmental damage through the increased use of pesticides. Indirect economic damage through restrictive quarantines on export commodities, particularly nursery stock, would be significant. In a recent pest risk analysis, we estimate that the damage caused by established Gypsy moth populations in Oregon could amount to over 14 million dollars a year, including indirect and direct damages, crop losses and quarantine costs.

The insect has infested several regions of the Eastern and Midwest United States, but is not considered to be established in Oregon. Since 1979, the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) has strived to prevent the spread of Gypsy moth into the state. Over the years, through federal and corporate partnerships, we have succeeded in this endeavor. While many eastern states in the US are infested, quarantined, and battling this insect, the state of Oregon is still considered Gypsy moth-free; however, on occasion, we do experience invasions of the Gypsy moths in Oregon, usually spread through human-assisted movement of out-door furniture or

recreational vehicles. Last year, 2017, we trapped a 4 Gypsy moths in a neighborhood of Corvallis, Benton County. This season, we already have caught 15 Gypsy moths in the delimitation survey around last year's positive catches. We are currently in the planning phase to eradicate this Gypsy moth infestation, which encompasses an area of about 640 acres of a mostly urban neighborhood. Unfortunately, Oregon Department of Agriculture does not have specific state revenues for this large-scale Gypsy moth eradication project.

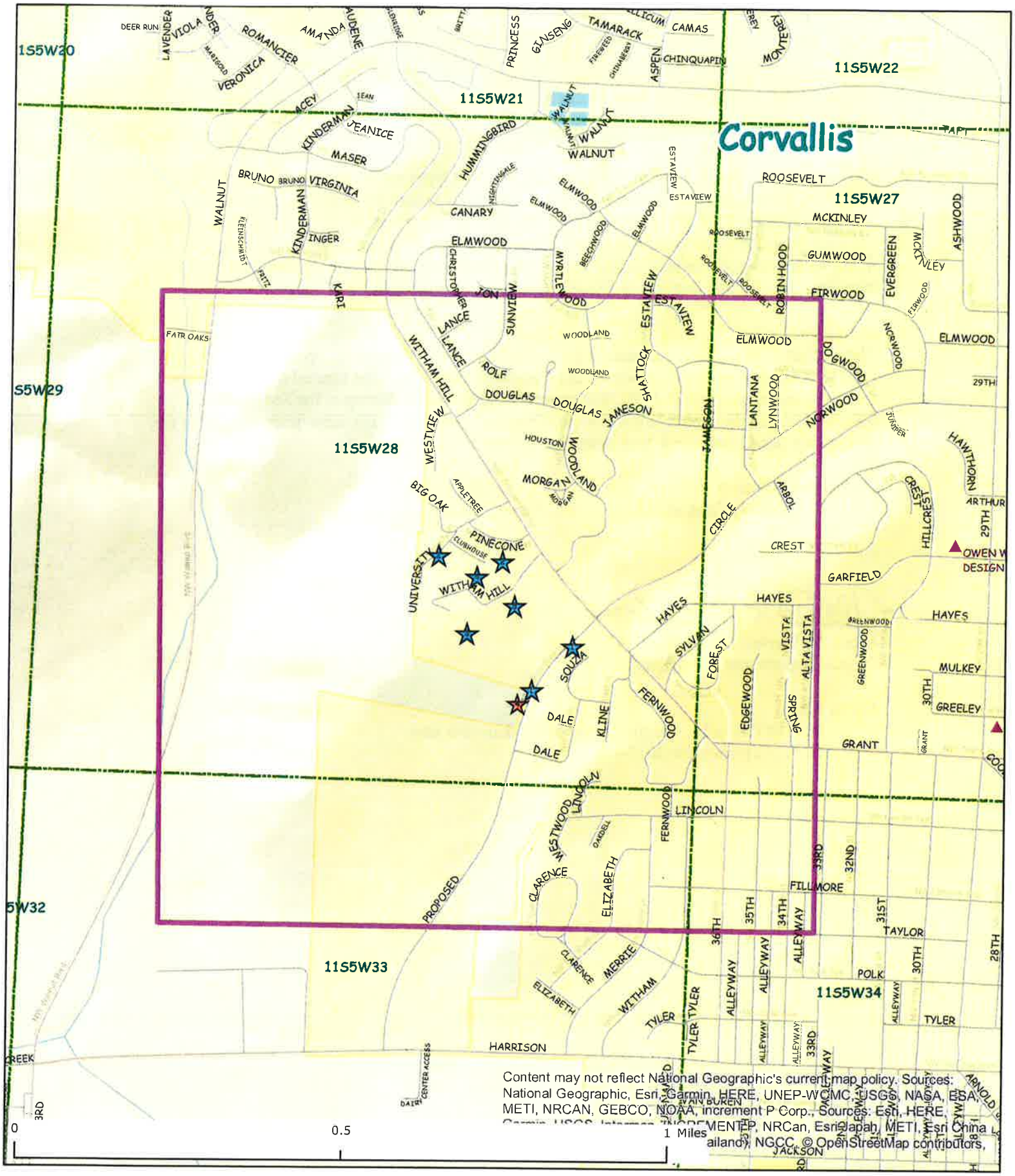
Action Requested
The Department respectfully requests the Emergency Board appropriate up to $395,603 General Fund to cover the state contribution for the eradication effort and three limited duration seasonal survey biotechnicians (0.75 FTE). The amount needed is dependent upon the Federal Funds contribution, and the department will request permission to appear at a subsequent meeting of the Emergency Board once the federal resources are known.

Legislation Affected
Oregon Law 2017, Chapter 562, Section 1, Subsection (3)

Sincerely,

Alexis M. Taylor, Director
Oregon Department of Agriculture

Attachments:
Map of Corvallis, Oregon Gypsy Moth detection sites
Budget estimate for 2017-19



Corvallis 2018

MAP 1

Legend

- 2017 Positive GM site
- 2018 Positive sites
- Eradication area

Software: ESRI ArcInfo
\\Fileserver\ODA\Shared\Plant\IPPM\Field Offices\Eugene\Benton_2018\Corvallis_Positive GMs_2018.mxd
Oregon Lambert Coordinate System, NAD 83, EPSG # 2992
Prepared by dkearns July 30, 2018
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