Wasco County Soil & Water Conservation District

2325 River Road. Suite 3
The Dalles, OR 97058-3551
Tel: (541) 705-3663, E-mail: wasco@wascoswcd.org

November 13, 2026

Oregon Department of Agriculture
Attn: Tristen Berg, Oregon State Weed Board
635 Capitol St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for Lower Deschutes CWMA Weed Control Grant Application

Dear Review Committee,

The Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors, serving as the reinstated Wasco County Weed Board, is pleased to express its strong support for the ’27-’28 Lower Deschutes CWMA Weed Control grant application.

The Lower Deschutes River corridor is one of Oregon’s most significant recreational, ecological, and agricultural landscapes. Spanning approximately 43 river miles from the Columbia river upstream to Buck Hollow Creek, the project area encompasses public and private lands that support important fish and wildlife habitat, world class recreation, and working lands. Invasive weeds threaten these resources by displacing native vegetation, degrading habitat, spreading along roads, trails, boat launches, campgrounds, and waterways.

This project builds upon nearly two decades of successful Cooperative Weed Management Area efforts and focuses on controlling priority invasive species, including Rush Skeletonweed, Scotch Thistle, Diffuse Knapweed, Yellow Starthistle, Puncturevine, White Top, Purple loosestrife, Leafy Spurge, and Dalmation Toadflax. Grant funding will support seasonal staffing, survey and treatment efforts across thousands of acres, and specialized raft based operations necessary to reach remote sections of the river.

The Board recognizes the importance of the collaborative approach that defines the Lower Deschutes CWMA. This project leverages the expertise and resources of numerous partners including the Oregon Dept. of Agriculture, Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Land Management, Oregon Parks and Recreation, Sherman County Weed District, Sherman County SWCD, NRCS, private landowners and other stakeholders working toward shared weed management goals.

As the recently reinstated Wasco County Weed Board, we believe coordinated weed management is essential to protecting watershed health and the economic and ecological values of the Lower Deschutes Basin. Continued OSWB support is critical to sustaining these landscape-scale efforts and preventing future infestations. We respectfully encourage funding of this proposal and appreciate your commitment to Oregon’s natural and agricultural resources.

Sincerely,

Bill Hammel, District Board Chair
Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors
Serving as the Wasco County Weed Board