



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oregon Farm Bureau

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Oregon Farm Bureau statement on spotted frog settlement

STATEMENT BY OREGON FARM BUREAU

SALEM, OREGON, November 2, 2016: "For over 20 years, Central Oregon irrigation districts have worked closely and collaboratively with local family farmers, the Warm Springs Tribe, and other stakeholders to protect the waters of the Deschutes Basin.

The two lawsuits involving the spotted frog were baseless and without any regard to this decades-long effort to balance conservation objectives with local economic and social needs.

We support the irrigation districts and thank them for their efforts to protect local irrigators in the face of this frivolous litigation.

Oregon farmers are committed to environmental conservation and efficient water use, many making sizable investments in the latest irrigation technology.

While the settlement will reduce uncertainty about water availability and will allow irrigators to plan for 2017, the fact that it developed as a response to meritless lawsuits is extremely concerning. Litigation should not take the place of collaborative efforts in achieving conservation goals.

Oregon Farm Bureau worked closely with Jefferson, Deschutes, and Crook-Wheeler County Farm Bureaus on this issue on behalf of our members for over a year.

'Farmers impacted by the litigation will be wary of working with environmental groups like WaterWatch in the future,' said Mickey Killingsworth of Jefferson County Farm Bureau. 'The livelihood of Central Oregon farm families was threatened by these unjust lawsuits, and the ramifications will last long after the settlement.' "

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* Note to Editors: "Farm Bureau" is a registered trademark; please capitalize in all cases.

The state's largest general farm organization, Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is a grassroots, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization representing the interests of the state's farmers and ranchers in the public and policymaking arenas. First established in Oregon in 1919, Farm Bureau is organized in all 36 counties and has 7,000 member families that are professionally engaged in agriculture.

Oregon Farm Bureau President Barry Bushue is a third-generation farmer raising a variety of vegetables and berries at a nearly century-old farm near Boring, Oregon. He is OFB's 15th president.

