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Oregon Farm Bureau Gives Rep. Susan McLain Award for Efforts

Oregon Farm Bureau honored Rep. Susan McLain with an award for her work on legislation critical to farm and ranch families.

Rep. McLain was essential in helping get HB 2437, “the ditch cleaning bill,” passed by the 2019 Oregon Legislature. The legislation helps farmers more easily clean out debris from dry drainage ditches, a task that had required a very complicated, expensive permitting process. The program will roll out sometime in 2020.

A Farm Bureau award of appreciation was presented to Rep. McLain on Dec. 12, 2019 during the 87th Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) Convention at the Salishan Resort in Gleneden Beach.

“In all of Farm Bureau’s years working on legislative issues in Salem, we have rarely seen a legislator fight for a proposal they believe in like Rep. Susan McLain did for HB 2437, the ditch cleaning bill that OFB worked hard to pass this session,” said outgoing OFB President Sharon Waterman.

During the 2019 state session, Rep. McLain co-chaired a workgroup with Rep. David Brock Smith to resolve farmers’ long-standing issues with the Department of State Lands around ditch cleaning. After learning about the issue, Rep. McLain immediately identified it as one she wanted to work on, and with Rep. Brock Smith, they spent hours helping negotiate a bill that would actually be workable for farmers and ranchers.

“When the bill faced strong opposition from a number of environmental groups, and an eventual veto threat by the governor, Rep. McLain stood strong for the agricultural community and worked hard to rally support from her colleagues for the bill. It is rare to see a legislator invest so fully in a bill they believe in and to stand strong in the face of immense opposition, even from within her own party,” said outgoing OFB President Waterman.

“We thank Rep. McLain for fighting so hard for a workable solution to a problem that has plagued Oregon’s farmers and ranchers for decades. I am honored to present Rep. McLain with this award in appreciation of her tireless pursuit of solutions for farm and ranch families in the maintenance of their ditches,” said outgoing OFB President Waterman.

PHOTO 1: On Dec. 12 during the 2019 OFB Convention, Farm Bureau honored partners who were instrumental in getting the “ditch bill,” HB 2437, passed through the state legislature this year. From
MCLAIN: On Dec. 12 during the 2019 OFB Convention, Farm Bureau honored Rep. Susan McLain, who was instrumental in getting the “ditch bill,” HB 2437, passed through the state legislature this year. From left are outgoing OFB President Sharon Waterman, Rep. Susan McLain, and OFB EVP Dave Dillon.


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

Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is a grassroots, nonpartisan, nonprofit, general farm organization representing the interests of farming and ranching families in the public and policymaking arenas. First established in Oregon at the county level in 1919 and the state level in 1932, Farm Bureau is organized in all 36 counties.

Oregon Farm Bureau President Barb Iverson, elected on Dec. 12, 2019, comes from a multigenerational family farm from Woodburn, raising industrial hemp, grass seed, squash, vetch seed, hazelnuts, wine and table grapes, and operating the Wooden Shoe Tulip Festival, which attracts over 160,000 visitors each year.