

November 13, 2025

VIA EMAIL (planning@yamhillcounty.gov)

Yamhill County Board of Commissioners
535 NE 5th Street
McMinnville, OR 97128

Re: Supplemental Evidence of Isidro Javier Ceja – Docket No. C-01-25

Dear Chair Johnston, Commissioner Starrett, and Commissioner King:

On November 6, 2025, my neighbors submitted additional testimony and evidence. I would like to briefly respond to their evidentiary submission by clarifying the record on several matters.

1. Vegetative Screening

My neighbors have requested that my home occupation activities be shielded by a fence or hedge, and that a condition of approval (“COA”) be included addressing this issue. We have already been planning to plant a vegetation screen along the southern and western borders of our property, shielding both our home and our home occupation business from NE Equestrian Drive and the properties to the south and west. Attached as Exhibit A is an aerial photo of our property with annotations showing where this planting will occur.

We intend to plant this hedging in Autumn 2026 to take advantage of favorable climatic and hydrological conditions. It is in the best interest of all parties involved for this hedging to thrive and grow rapidly. The Willamette Valley favors fall planting to take advantage of soil temperatures and increased rainfall, before colder and stormier winter weather sets in. See Exhibits B & C.

2. Stormwater:

My neighbors identify several vague concerns about stormwater, including an entirely unsubstantiated allegation that “[t]he business use also creates more than triple the amount of stormwater than the residence.” See November 6, 2025 Appellants’ Letter to Yamhill County BOC, at 8. As I have repeatedly explained, I have not been operating my business on this property to date, so I am not clear how my neighbors reached their conclusion about stormwater impacts.

If my neighbors are concerned about stormwater impacts from the barn structure, those issues should have been raised when the County issued my building permit for the barn. As I have explained, the County did review and approve my stormwater and drainage plans as part of that building permit review process. The County has also been out to inspect my barn since it has been constructed, and the inspector did not identify any concerns related to stormwater or drainage.

As to potential stormwater impacts from my home occupation, I am not aware of any business activities that would cause unreasonable or unusual drainage, stormwater, or groundwater impacts—particularly when compared to traditional farming activities already occurring in the EFU zone, like crop irrigation and farm equipment washing. As I have explained, my on-site business activities will be limited to an office and the storage and minor, routine cleaning of equipment (with most equipment cleaning occurring offsite). It is difficult to refute unsubstantiated claims, but my home occupation use would occur on irrigable EFU land and use considerably less water than many agricultural uses would on a farm property of this acreage.

Sincerely,



Isidro Javier Ceja

Exhibit A – Vegetation Screen Planting Plan



Tree Screen Planting Plan

Exhibit B – When to Plant Different Tree Species in Oregon Zones

When to Plant Different Tree Species in Oregon Zones

Oregon contains a wide range of climates and elevations, from maritime coastal forests to high desert plateaus. Planting trees successfully in Oregon requires matching species to the USDA hardiness zone and the local microclimate, and choosing the correct planting season so roots establish before heat, drought, or deep freeze. This guide explains when to plant common tree species across Oregon zones, gives practical month-by-month windows for the major regions, and provides a concrete planting checklist and aftercare schedule you can follow for reliable establishment.

Understanding Oregon Hardiness Zones and Microclimates

Oregon spans roughly USDA zones 4 through 9. That range creates distinct recommendations:

- Coastal and lowland Willamette Valley: Zones 8-9 (mild winters, moderate summers).
- Interior Willamette Valley and lower elevations: Zones 7-8 (some winter chill, moderate precipitation).
- Western Cascades and Columbia Gorge foothills: Zones 6-7 (cooler, more winter precipitation).
- Eastern Oregon and high desert: Zones 4-6 (cold winters, hot dry summers, large diurnal swings).
- High elevation mountains: zone 4 or colder in the subalpine areas.

Takeaway: use broad zone guidance, then refine for elevation, slope aspect (south-facing warms earlier and dries faster), urban heat islands, and cold air drainage pockets.

Seasonal Principles: Fall vs Spring Planting

Choosing fall or spring planting is one of the most important decisions you can make.

- Fall planting (best in most western Oregon locations): From September through early November in the Willamette Valley and coastal areas. Soil is still warm, allowing rapid root growth while top growth slows. Fall-planted trees establish roots over winter and show strong spring growth. Avoid planting when the ground freezes or when heavy, continuous rain will compact soil and suffocate roots.
- Spring planting (best in eastern Oregon, high desert, and colder inland sites): From early March through May, once soil is workable and before trees leaf out in earnest. In cold inland zones, root systems planted in fall may face deep freeze and heaving; spring planting avoids that risk. Plant early enough in spring to allow roots to grow before summer heat and drought.
- Container-grown trees: more flexible. You can plant almost year-round in mild coastal climates, but still follow local frost and soil conditions.

Practical rule: Plant when the tree can put energy into roots rather than aboveground growth. In mild western Oregon that usually means late fall; in cold, dry eastern Oregon that usually means early spring.

Species-by-Region: When to Plant and Why

Below are common trees grouped by Oregon region, with optimal planting windows and practical notes.

Coastal and Lower Willamette Valley (Zones 8-9)

Plants that thrive: Sitka spruce, western red cedar, bigleaf maple, Oregon ash, madrone (in protected spots), native oaks in some southern coastal pockets, fruit trees (apples, pears, cherries).

When to plant: September through November, or late February through April for bare-root deciduous trees.

Notes: Salt spray limits some species on exposed shorelines; choose tolerant genotypes. Sitka spruce and red cedar are adapted to heavy soils and year-round moisture; avoid planting subtropical species in exposed sites. Fruit trees benefit from planting in late winter to early spring when purchased bare-root.

Willamette Valley Interior and Foothills (Zones 7-8)

Plants that thrive: Douglas-fir, Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*), bigleaf maple, western red cedar, flowering dogwood, cherries, apples.

When to plant: September through November for most species; early spring (February to April) also acceptable, especially for bareroot stock.

Notes: Fall planting gives the best root establishment before summer drought. In heavier clay soils, plant on mounds or raised beds for better drainage.

Western Cascades and Columbia Gorge Foothills (Zones 6-7)

Plants that thrive: Douglas-fir, western hemlock, ponderosa pine at lower elevations, red alder along streams, bigleaf maple.

When to plant: Fall after soils cool but before hard freezes (September-November) or early spring after melt (March-April).

Notes: Avoid planting on south-facing ridges in late fall because exposed roots can desiccate. Plant in spring if soil remains saturated or at risk of heaving.

Eastern Oregon and High Desert (Zones 4-6)

Plants that thrive: Ponderosa pine, western juniper (native in many areas), aspen (near riparian zones), cottonwood in irrigated places, mountain mahogany and hardy fruit rootstocks.

When to plant: Early spring as soon as soils thaw and are workable, typically March through late April or early May depending on elevation.

Notes: Trees must establish roots before summer heat. Irrigation and frost protection are critical for the first 2-3 years. Avoid fall planting unless you can protect young roots from deep freeze and wind desiccation.

High Elevation and Cold Sites (Zone 4 and colder pockets)

Plants that thrive: Mountain hemlock, subalpine fir, lodgepole pine, native aspen.

When to plant: Short window in late spring to early summer after frost risk ends and before the onset of winter. Often late May to early July depending on elevation.

Notes: High-elevation planting is risky; use locally sourced stock adapted to short growing seasons.

Recommended Planting Months by Major Oregon Areas

- Coastal Willamette and metro Portland: Best window September through November; alternative window February through April for bare-root deciduous trees.
- Eugene/Springfield and southern Willamette Valley: Best window September through early December; alternative late winter/early spring.
- Bend, Redmond, Klamath Basin (high desert): Best window early March through May; sometimes mid- to late September if irrigation and protection are available.
- Eastern Columbia Gorge and Cascade foothills: Plant fall where soils are stable and frost pockets are not severe; otherwise early spring.

Planting Checklist: Step-by-Step (Numbered)

1. Select species adapted to your USDA zone, soil type, and moisture regime.
2. Choose the right planting time: fall for western Oregon, spring for eastern Oregon, adjust by microclimate.
3. Inspect root flare; keep it at or just above soil level when planted.
4. Dig a hole 2-3 times the diameter of the root ball but no deeper than the ball height; wide, shallow holes encourage root spread.
5. Backfill with native soil mixed up to 10-20% coarse compost only if soil is extremely poor; do not bury the root flare or add excessive organic matter that creates a pot effect.
6. Stake only if necessary; loose, flexible ties prevent girdling and allow some movement to promote trunk taper.
7. Apply 2-4 inches of organic mulch in a 2-4 foot radius, keeping mulch away from trunk bark.
8. Water deeply at planting to settle soil; then follow a season-specific irrigation schedule (see next section).

9. Monitor for pests, browse, and sunscald; protect as needed with fencing, guards, or shading in the first season.

Ensure there is a blank line before this numbered list and after it.

Watering and Early Care: Concrete Rates and Timing

New trees require regular deep watering rather than frequent shallow watering.

- Year 1: Water newly planted trees 1-2 times per week with 10-20 gallons per application for small to medium trees; larger trees require proportionally more water. In hot, dry eastern Oregon summers, water twice per week or more.
- Year 2: Reduce to every 7-10 days during the growing season, still applying deep soakings.
- Year 3 and beyond: Gradually taper to monthly deep waterings in summer for most species, establishing drought tolerance unless species requires moisture year-round.

Practical tips: Use a soaker hose or slow-fill bucket to ensure water reaches the root zone. Test soil moisture by digging 3-6 inches down; if soil is dry at that depth, water.

Soil, Fertilizer, and Mulch Recommendations

- Planting depth: keep root flare visible at grade. Planting too deep is the most common cause of failure.
- Soil amendments: add no more than 10-20% aged compost to backfill. Avoid excessive amendments that concentrate nutrients around the root ball and discourage roots from spreading.
- Fertilizer: do not apply high-nitrogen fertilizer at planting. If necessary, use a slow-release, low-dose fertilizer after the first growing season based on soil test results.
- Mulch: 2-4 inches of coarse organic mulch (wood chips, bark) in a 2-4 foot circle; keep mulch 2-3 inches away from the trunk.

Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them

- Planting too deep: expose the root flare; replant if necessary.
- Poor timing: planting in waterlogged soil or immediately before deep freeze increases mortality. Follow the region-specific windows above.
- Overwatering or underwatering: establish a consistent deep watering schedule, then allow tapering.
- Insufficient site matching: plant drought-tolerant species on south-facing, rocky sites; plant moisture-loving species along riparian corridors.

Species Notes: Special Considerations

- Douglas-fir: Extremely adaptable in western Oregon; plant in fall or early spring. Avoid planting in very droughty, exposed urban sites unless irrigation is available.
- Oregon White Oak (*Quercus garryana*): Plant in fall for best root establishment; oak seedlings do poorly when overwatered—use mulch and moderate irrigation.
- Western Red Cedar: Likes moist sites; do best with fall planting in wet western Oregon soils. Not recommended for dry inland sites.
- Ponderosa Pine and Western Juniper: Suited to eastern Oregon; plant in early spring and provide protection from vole and rabbit browsing.
- Fruit Trees (apples, pears, cherries): Bare-root stock best planted late winter to early spring when dormant. Container stock can be planted in fall in mild zones.

Final Practical Takeaways

- Match species to local zone and microclimate first; good timing cannot fix a poor species choice.
- In western Oregon (coast, Willamette), prefer fall planting when possible; in eastern Oregon, prefer early spring.
- Plant wide, shallow holes, keep the root flare at grade, mulch properly, and water deeply but infrequently to encourage strong root growth.
- Use protective measures for herbivory and staking only when necessary; avoid excessive soil amendments and fertilizers at planting.

Following these region-specific windows and practical steps will greatly increase survival and long-term health of trees planted across Oregon zones. Successful tree planting depends on timing, proper technique, and matching the tree to the site; do those three things well and your new trees will reward you for decades.

Exhibit C – Fall Planting of Trees and Shrubs in Oregon: The Ultimate
Guide to Autumn Planting



Fall Planting of Trees and Shrubs in Oregon: The Ultimate Guide to Autumn Planting



Why fall is Oregon's "cheat code" for planting

Ask any seasoned Oregon gardener when to put trees and shrubs in the ground and you'll hear the same refrain: **fall**. As summer heat eases, our soils stay warm while air temps cool—exactly what roots love. Autumn rains (especially west of the Cascades) help you water less, plants experience less transplant shock, and roots develop quietly all winter. By spring, fall-planted trees and shrubs wake up with a bigger root system and sprint into growth.

A helpful primer that echoes this "plant in fall" thesis is [Plant Something Oregon's](#) feature on autumn planting—worth a read if you want the quick science and practical benefits in one place: [Autumn: The ultimate season for planting trees and shrubs](#).

In short:

- Warm soil + cool air = root-first growth.
- Autumn rain = less hand watering.
- Lower stress = lower failure rates.
- Head start = stronger plants next summer.

Oregon's climates in one minute (so you plant at the right time)

Oregon isn't one garden—it's several. Match your timing and plant list to your region:

- Willamette Valley & West of the Cascades (Zones ~7-9): Mild, wet winters; dry summers. Fall planting runs September through early winter whenever soil is workable (avoid frozen/waterlogged days).
- Central & Eastern Oregon / High Desert (Zones ~4-6): Colder winters, hotter summers, less rain. Aim for early-mid fall (Sept-Oct) to beat hard freezes; plan to irrigate during dry spells.
- Oregon Coast (Zones ~8-9): Cool, windy, salty air, abundant moisture. Fall planting excels; pick wind- and salt-tolerant species and amend sandy soils.

When in doubt, ask your local independent nursery for your first frost date and a 4-6 week buffer before ground freeze in colder areas.

What to plant: region-by-region tree & shrub shortlists

Below are homeowner-friendly choices that establish well in fall. Always confirm mature size, light needs, and soil preferences before buying.

Willamette Valley & Western Oregon

Natives (low-maintenance and wildlife friendly):

- Vine maple (*Acer circinatum*) – small tree, stellar red/orange fall color; part shade tolerant.
- Red-flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*) – spring hummingbird magnet; drought tolerant once established.
- Mock orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*) – fragrant late-spring bloom; easygoing.
- Oceanspray (*Holodiscus discolor*) – foamy summer plumes, handles summer dryness.
- Oregon grape (*Mahonia aquifolium*) – evergreen, spring flowers, blue berries; tough cornerstone shrub.
- Western crabapple (*Malus fusca*) – small native tree, great for birds.

Climate-adapted ornamentals:

- Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*) – unmatched form and fall color; prefers even moisture.
- Camellia (*Camellia* spp.) – evergreen, fall/winter/spring bloom by variety; acidic soil, part shade.
- Evergreen huckleberry (*Vaccinium ovatum*) – edible berries, glossy foliage; thrives in acidic, organic soil.

Where to learn more: local extension bulletins and independent nurseries regularly publish “west-side native” and “PNW-proven” lists. The Plant Something Oregon article linked above is a great season-timing explainer and a springboard to local nursery expertise: Plant Something Oregon (Autumn planting).

Central & Eastern Oregon (High Desert)

Natives & tough landscape workhorses:

- Serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*) – four seasons: flowers, edible berries, color, structure.
- Red-twig dogwood (*Cornus sericea*) – winter stem color; thrives with occasional irrigation.
- Kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) – evergreen groundcover for hot, dry slopes.
- Rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa*) – late-summer gold; ultra drought-tolerant.
- Big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) – iconic silver foliage; thrives in lean soils.
- Mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus ledifolius*) – evergreen, wind-firm, long-lived.
- Ponderosa pine / Western juniper – plant young stock early in fall; deep water pre-freeze.

Hardy ornamentals (choose compact forms for smaller lots):

- Dwarf mugo pine, spirea, potentilla, ninebark – all proven survivors; choose newer cultivars for scale and color.

Pro tip: amend with compost at planting and mulch to combat low organic matter; plan on regular fall watering until ground freeze.

Oregon Coast

Salt- and wind-tolerant standouts:

- Shore pine (*Pinus contorta* var. *contorta*) – sculptural evergreen that loves sand and wind.
- Pacific wax myrtle (*Morella californica*) – fast hedge/screen; excellent windbreak.
- Coastal silktassel (*Garrya elliptica*, esp. 'James Roof') – winter catkins; dramatic.
- Evergreen huckleberry (*Vaccinium ovatum*) – handsome edible hedge.
- Ceanothus (e.g., 'Victoria') – blue spring bloom; thrives in fast-draining coastal soils.
- Hydrangea, escallonia, hebes, rockroses – reliable evergreen structure and seasonal color.

Soil note: coastal sands often benefit from organic matter to hold moisture and support acid-loving plants.

The foolproof fall-planting method (trees & shrubs)

Use this universal process. It's quick, forgiving, and designed for Oregon's fall weather.

1. **Right plant, right place.** Confirm sun, soil, drainage, and mature size. Avoid future pruning battles by sizing correctly now.
 2. **Pre-water the area (if bone dry).** Moist soil reduces transplant shock and makes digging easier.
 3. **Dig wide, not deep.** Hole should be 2x the width of the root ball and no deeper than root-ball height. Roughen slick sides.
 4. **Fix root problems now.** On container stock, **tease circling roots** or make a few vertical cuts. Remove top wire/rope/burlap on B&B trees.
 5. **Set height at or slightly above grade.** Keep the root flare visible—don't bury the trunk.
 6. **Backfill with native soil + 20-30% compost.** Don't over-amend or you'll make a "pot" in the ground; you want roots to explore.
 7. **Water deeply to settle.** Soak the root zone to eliminate air pockets. Form a low water berm at the edge of the hole for the first season.
 8. **Mulch 2-3 inches.** Keep mulch off the trunk by a few inches. Mulch = moisture retention + weed suppression + winter soil insulation.
 9. **Stake only if necessary.** Two stakes, soft ties, remove in 6-12 months. Many shrubs and small trees don't need staking.
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Fall & winter care (the part that makes spring easy)

- **Water smart:** West-side gardeners can often let rain take over by late fall, but check soil under mulch—don't assume. East-side/high-desert plantings usually need weekly deep watering in fall until the freeze. Water evergreens once or twice during prolonged winter dry spells above freezing.
 - **Watch the forecast:** Before a sharp early freeze—especially east of the Cascades—water the day prior. Moist soil holds heat better than dry.
 - **Maintain mulch:** Top up if needed; keep it pulled back from trunks/stems to prevent rot and vole hideouts.
 - **Skip fertilizer:** Don't push soft top growth in fall. Feed in late winter/early spring if indicated by plant performance or soil test.
 - **Guard against wildlife:** Use trunk guards for rabbits/voles; netting or repellents where deer browse heavily.
 - **Minimal pruning:** Remove only dead/damaged wood at planting. Save shaping for late winter or the following year after establishment.
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Quick calendar by region (typical years)

- **Willamette Valley / West-side:** Plant Sept-early Dec and late Jan-March (when soil is workable).
- **Central & Eastern Oregon:** Plant Sept-Oct; earlier is safer. Avoid late-fall installs that can't root before hard freeze.
- **Coast:** Plant Sept-Nov; keep an eye on wind exposure and stake only where truly needed.

(Adjust for unseasonal heat waves, soaked soils, or early snaps.)

Easy wins: small yards, low water, year-round interest

If you're overwhelmed by choices, try these simple formulas per region:

Willamette Valley small-yard trio

- **Tree:** Vine maple (multi-stem for sculptural form).
- **Evergreen:** Oregon grape (state flower; pollinators love it).
- **Seasonal color:** Red-twig dogwood (winter stems) or camellia (winter blooms).

Central Oregon low-water trio

- **Tree/shrub:** Serviceberry (four-season show).
- **Evergreen groundcover:** Kinnikinnick (binds slopes; minimal care).
- **Structure:** Dwarf mugo pine or compact ninebark (select cold-hardy cultivars).

Coastal wind-smart trio

- **Screen:** Pacific wax myrtle (fast, clip to shape).
 - **Feature evergreen:** Shore pine (windswept character).
 - **Edible hedge:** Evergreen huckleberry (berries + birds).
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Common mistakes (and the fix)

- **Planting too deep.** Always set the root flare at or slightly above grade.
 - **Under- or over-watering.** Check moisture under mulch with your hand or a probe; water deeply but infrequently.
 - **Skipping mulch.** It's non-negotiable for first-year success.
 - **Over-amending the hole.** Blend with native soil so roots don't circle in a "soft spot."
 - **Planting too late in cold regions.** In the high desert, shoot for early fall so roots establish pre-freeze.
 - **Ignoring mature size.** A 6-foot shrub in a 3-foot bed will become a pruning chore. Size it right at purchase.
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Simple soil & site tweaks that pay off

- **Drainage check:** If a 12"-deep test hole holds water overnight, build a raised mound/berm or choose water-tolerant species.
 - **Acid lovers (camellia, huckleberry, rhody):** Work in leaf mold/composted bark to nudge pH downward and boost organic matter.
 - **Wind exposure:** On the coast and in the Columbia Gorge, plan windbreaks (fencing, hedges) and consider staking taller trees the first winter.
 - **Sun mapping:** Observe summer and winter sun angles; don't tuck sun-lovers under deep eaves or shaded north walls.
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Watering math for new trees & shrubs (rule of thumb)

- **Shrubs (1-3 gal):** 1-2 deep soaks/week in fall when dry; 5-10 min with a slow trickle or 2-3 gallons from a watering can, depending on soil.
- **Small trees (5-15 gal):** 1 deep soak/week; aim for 10-15 gallons into the root zone per irrigation in fall dryness.
- **Balled & burlapped or larger caliper trees:** Soak twice the first week, then weekly; confirm moisture at 6-8" depth.

Adjust for rainfall, temperature, wind, and soil type (sand drains faster than clay).

Budget ideas: plant smaller, plant smarter

- **Buy smaller containers.** A healthy 1- or 2-gallon shrub often outgrows a pot-bound 5-gallon within two years.
 - **Leverage fall sales.** Nurseries discount heavily in October/November—perfect timing in western Oregon.
 - **Group plants by water needs.** Saves time and money.
 - **Use leaves as mulch.** Shred with a mower and apply 2-3" around beds (keep off crowns).
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Quick FAQs (for Oregon homeowners)

Q: Can I plant in winter west of the Cascades?

A: Often yes—if soil is workable (not frozen or waterlogged). Many west-side trees and shrubs transplant beautifully mid-winter.

Q: Is it okay to fertilize at planting?

A: Skip it in fall. Let roots settle. Reassess in late winter/early spring with a light, slow-release product if needed or after a soil test.

Q: How much should I prune at planting?

A: Only remove broken/crossing branches. Structural pruning can wait until late winter or the following year.

Q: How do I know I'm watering enough?

A: Dig a small test hole at the edge of the root ball. Cool, moist soil at 3-6" depth is the target. Adjust by weather and soil.

Q: What about deer?

A: Use temporary cages/netting the first year. Choose less-palatable species where pressure is high, and consider repellents.

Local help and further reading

- **Seasonal overview & why autumn wins:** [Plant Something Oregon – Autumn: The ultimate season for planting trees and shrubs](#)
- **Find region-ready plants & timing:** Your **local independent nursery** (many are part of the [Oregon Association of Nurseries](#)) can steer you to the best cultivars for your microclimate, stock sizes that transplant well in fall, and practical irrigation advice for your soil type.