

May 20, 2015



The Honorable Chris Edwards, Chair
Senate Committee
Environment & Natural Resources
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE, S-411
Salem, OR 97301

Sent via E-Mail

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oregondairyfarmers.org

The Honorable Alan Olsen, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee
Environment & Natural Resources
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE, H-425
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 3367 – Rails to Trails Legislation

Dear Chair Edwards and Vice-Chair Olsen:

Please be advised the Oregon Dairy Farmers Association (ODFA) supports the original version of HB 3367, which requires bike paths in farm zones to be subject to the county land use permitting process, providing local farmers and ranchers the opportunity to raise concerns about the impacts of the bike paths to their farm operations.

HB 3367 was introduced as a result of confusion regarding DLCD's current rules and whether or not a county permit is required to construct bike paths in farm zones. DLCD recently clarified the bill is codifying existing law and is consistent with their interpretation of the statute and their rules. Metro does not wish for bike paths to go through the county land use process, and will likely seek an amendment to allow the siting of bike paths "outright" in farm zones, with the only exception being when the land for the path is being acquired by condemnation. Obviously, that type of amendment would be contrary to existing law, and the intent of the bill. Therefore, the ODFA would not be in support.

Tillamook is home to numerous dairy operations where a "Rails to Trails" project has generated a great deal of consternation. While this project was well intended, the initial conversations lacked input from the affected dairy farmers who believed their very livelihood to be in jeopardy if the public traveled through their active operations around dairy animals and heavy machinery.

With just 240 "Grade A" dairies in the State of Oregon contributing more than \$650 million in farm gate value for their fluid milk, the industry needs to be protected rather than exposed to trespass, trash and vandalism from uninvited persons who want to recreate near active farm operations.

The Oregon Dairy Farmers Association urges support of the original version of HB 3367 to ensure that Dairy Farmers have a voice in the process of bike path project sitings which may have very real unintentional safety hazards and economic consequences.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or wish to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

Tami Kerr, Executive Director
OREGON DAIRY FARMERS ASSOCIATION

Cc: The Honorable Michael Dembrow
The Honorable Floyd Prozanski
The Honorable Chuck Thomsen