

From: Suzanne Johannsen
To: [SENR Exhibits](#)
Subject: HB 2027
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I am writing to express my concern that the Oregon Legislature would be considering a bill for special interests over the greater good.

Outdoor recreation is a hallmark of Bend and central Oregon - for residents and visitors alike. A pedestrian bridge to connect the urban trail along the river with the larger river trail system to the south would provide a wonderful way for people to access that section of river trail without having to drive from Bend to one of the trailheads further upstream. We use these trails on a regular basis and the evidence of the high amount of use are abundant. These parking areas are always crowded and often beyond capacity. This area of the state is growing rapidly and accommodating multiple uses and multimodal access is going to be critical for the generations to come.

I have lived in Bend long enough to have experienced private property owners restricting public access to the river trail below Mt. Bachelor Village. What was once a well loved trail was suddenly fenced off from the public. After many years, the Bend Parks and Recreation District was able to obtain right of way for the trails. These trails are well used and much valued as part of the amenities in the city of Bend.

It is difficult to imagine that a foot trail would have more impact that building homes in the previous elk habitat. I noticed that once they built the homes, the Elk Crossing signs were taken down on that section of Century Drive. How can people who live in the former elk migration route now be asking for a state law to protect for the elk and deer migration? A decision to allow urban rural interface was already made when those homes were built. There are public processes in place to evaluate impacts and weigh the benefits of development and the needs for open space, habitat, etc. Long before a bridge is built the issues will be thoroughly addressed.

This bill is clearly meant to benefit a few property owners. This is Oregon - things should be different here!

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