

From: Arlene Spencer
To: [SENR Exhibits](#)
Subject: House Bill 2027 Testimony
Date: Monday, May 08, 2017 11:32:11 AM

To Whom It May Concern:

For twelve years I have been a full time resident living in Bend, Oregon. I have concerns about the Bend Park & Recreation District's (BPRD) proposed Deschutes River Bridge.

Please place this email into the official testimony record for this bill.

If the proposed bridge is placed in the Upper Deschutes Scenic Waterway, a designated and protected scenic area, not only would its designation and protections be disregarded, but the precedent of the wholesale eschewing of a protected scenic area will make scenic waterway designations elsewhere in Oregon worthless. It will be possible for this to occur again in Deschutes County or elsewhere in Oregon, and again and again.

In a scenic area there are no setbacks or buffer zones to preserve riparian zones, stream or river banks, spawning fry, frogs, or any other flora or fauna because it is not needed - it is wild. If BPRD builds its bridge, what environmental protections would exist to protect currently wild and unfettered ecosystems? None, because scenic and wild land requires none.

So, if the bridge is built there, BPRD will have no guidance or restrictions placed on its site selection, bridge construction, no requirement to put disturbed land and plants back after construction the way and condition it was found before construction, the construction or bridge's effects on water quality, temperature, aquatics including fish, etc.

Too, migrating elk, deer, and other wildlife would have no corridors protections or redirection put into place. The impact of tens and eventually hundreds of humans, over time, moving through wildlife corridors will be stressful if not dangerous to the wildlife and people.

This bridge brings yet more bad news for people living in the Brookwood neighborhood, in Bend, a part of the proposed trail route to link the bridge to other existing urban trails, have written to The Bulletin of their concerns about noise, safety, litter, and especially parking.

The greatest impact would be the ability to open currently protected scenic and wild lands to land development and construction - currently already an unmitigated bonanza and political quagmire for residents living inside of the Bend Urban Growth Boundary who happen to also pay taxes. Just drive anywhere in Bend right now. You'll see construction, loss of green and open spaces, increased density, and ultimately the irrevocable loss of a quality of life (that most residents moved here for, to avoid urban sprawl back home where we came from).

This bridge is a Trojan Horse handing local developers carte blanche along the river, outside of the Urban Growth Boundary (yet further avoiding development rules and regulations), and on the west side of the river where it is currently wild and accessible to all already. Trails already exist there (and in fact, they are accessible trails - paved for miles).

If BPRD is so concerned about Bendites living on the east side having to get into their cars in order to access the west side of the Deschutes River (Editorial, page D3, The Bulletin (Bend),

May 6, 2017) then BPRD can begin a shuttle service providing rides to east side residents going to the west side of the Deschutes in the scenic waterway corridor. No bridge is necessary to alleviate that concern. But I have to drive from my not-on-the-east side-of Bend home to any trail or park beyond a mile or two from my house. Is this concerning to BPRD, as well? I have not heard that it is. So, why a bridge there? Why now?

To answer those two questions, it is worth noting in the official record that there has been a small development and construction boom, and civil infrastructure is planned to be built by the City to enable further population growth RIGHT at the proposed bridge site. Scarily, these two facts seems to make the site location and the timing make sense - and this is very concerning as land development and construction are each outside the scope of BPRD's mission, "To strengthen community vitality and foster healthy, enriched lifestyles by providing exceptional park and recreation services." (BPRD website)

Let's be clear. This bridge's negative impacts are not BPRD's job to do. Not any of it. Taking wild lands and ecosystems from the public is neither strengthening community, fostering healthy enriched lifestyles, nor is it providing exceptional recreation - as the wild scenic waterway and its flora and fauna will be usurped and sullied. This proposed bridge is way outside of the the BPRD's mission statement.

That BPRD is proposing this bridge, where it is, when it is - is gravely concerning. The negative impacts to the community, land, water and natural resources; and the negative legal precedents this bridge would set are alarming. Please vote for H.B. 2027 and do not allow a bridge to be built in southern Bend across the Deschutes in the scenic waterway.

Thank you for your attention to my request and points.

Sincerely,
Arlene Spencer
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