

From: Michael Doram
To: [SENRR Exhibits](#)
Subject: House Bill 2027
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Senator Michael Dembrow, Chair
Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee

This is to strongly urge your committee to approve the measures contained in House Bill 2027 which protect a small stretch of the Deschutes River outside of the city of Bend.

The Bend Parks and Recreation District (BPRD) is trying to circumvent the current designation of this portion of the river as a Scenic zone under the Oregon Scenic Waterway Act. BPRD wants to built two (2) bridges, one for bicycles and one for foot traffic, despite the fact that currently a new pedestrian bridge is specifically prohibited.

The Scenic status of this approximately one mile segment of the river was adopted under a statewide ballot measure in 1988 and for good reason. There is no good enough reason to change it. Instead the protection needs to be strengthened. Since this segment of the river is not within the federally designated Wild and Scenic zone, it is up to the legislature to take strong action to protect it from what Eric Lukens (editor of the Bend Bulletin, 5/07/2017 opinion article) refers to as "thousands of Bend residents" who might be using the bridges.

Actually, this one mile has the weakest protection on the Upper Deschutes because a bridge could be built by **anyone** if, after one year following review by Oregon Parks and Recreation Department of the Notice of Intent to Build, that agency takes no action to prevent it. The OPRD has not taken anyone to court to enforce its scenic rules for the Deschutes.

Aside from the existing Scenic status, this stretch of the river is home to otter, beaver, osprey, eagles, the habitat endangered spotted frog and other fauna and flora deserving of protection now and for future generations. Allowing bridges, bicycles, pedestrians (and their dogs) where they are not currently permitted would be irresponsible, threaten the existing wildlife and would disregard the statewide approval previously granted.

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