

From: Colleen McNally
To: [SENR Exhibits](#)
Subject: House Bill 2027-A
Date: Monday, May 08, 2017 11:48:26 PM

To the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Re: House Bill 2027-A, Prohibition of a Bridge Across the Deschutes River south of Bend

As a fourth generation Oregonian and eleven-year resident of Bend, I am extremely disheartened by the efforts to prohibit a future pedestrian bridge across the Deschutes River to connect trails and recreation at the southern end of Bend. For transparency purposes, I am an employee of the Bend Park & Recreation District, but I am writing to you with my own personal viewpoint as a south Bend homeowner and resident.

Recreational access to our public lands, rivers and beaches is at the heart of Oregon values. As Oregonians, we should all take pride in our public spaces while taking care of those places and working to ensure that public access continues in our communities and state for generations to come.

The Deschutes River Scenic Waterway combined with the Deschutes River Trail offers relaxation, amazement and joy within beautiful natural spaces as well as opportunities for positive, healthy and enriching activities such as hiking, running, cycling, fishing, kayaking and boating, Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, geological study, photography, nature watching and so much more. As a whole, Bendites have shown in numerous community surveys over several decades that they value such natural spaces, trails and outdoor recreation.

To prohibit a trail bridge in the area south of Bend denies thousands of local east-of-the-river Bend residents like myself pedestrian and cyclist access to west side trails and recreation on [Deschutes National Forest](#) lands as well as within Bend Park & Recreation District's trail system. For those on the east side of the river, in order to reasonably access the west side Forest Service lands and trail system, we need to drive, and it's a busy, often congested route of 6 to 12 miles round trip to the trail head parking areas.

Oregon scenic waterways are supposed to consider and support recreation opportunities. But in this section of the Deschutes River, there is a small collection of private property owners disguised as a "council" or river interest group that want special conditions of prohibiting a bridge to deny public recreation access across the river. It's a classic version of "not in my back yard." They have had this bill pushed hastily forward with hardly any public involvement. To them and you I say, public lands are all of our "backyard" and that restriction of a bridge and public access is un-Oregonian and wrong for our community now and into our future.

Please take care of and ensure Oregonians' access to public lands and waterways for recreation.

Please vote "no" on House Bill 2027-A.

Sincerely,
Colleen McNally

Southwest Bend resident, homeowner and outdoors enthusiast