

60663 River Bend Dr.
Bend, OR 97702-8945
November 3, 2015

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
1115 Commercial St NE., Suite 1
Salem, OR 97301-1002

Re: Upper Deschutes Bridge Proposal

Dear OPRD:

I attended the public hearing held in Bend on October 28, 2015. I was also a member of the Citizen Advisory Committee sponsored by the Bend Park and Recreation District (BPRD) to consider a project to locate and build a bridge across the Upper Deschutes River upstream from Bend. I live on the river in the River Bend Estates neighborhood, on the east side of the river.

I am opposed to amending the Scenic Waterways act to permit bridges to be built across the Upper Deschutes River. A bridge across any portion of the river considered by BPRD would substantively alter the nature of the Upper Deschutes from a Wild and Scenic River to a ***Domesticated, Tamed and Convenient*** River. The whole purpose of the Scenic Waterways Act of 1970 was to prevent this from happening. To quote your own pamphlet, *Oregon's Scenic Waterways*:

“Oregon’s Scenic Waterways Program was born in 1970 when Oregon citizens voted, by a two-to-one margin, for an initiative establishing the Oregon Scenic Waterways Act. Passing this law showed that Oregonians could come together to improve and protect an environment they love, and **want to pass on to generations to come.**”
(emphasis added)

The folks who wrote into law the prohibition of bridges in our area knew what they were doing. They could envision growth in the area and the threat it would pose to the Scenic Waterway. The presence of any bridge (ones built by BPRD are not narrow, but rather wide, even for “pedestrians and bicycles”) ruins the whole spirit and atmosphere of a wild and undomesticated landscape. That is not what the Upper Deschutes is all about.

If the act is amended to permit the bridge proposed by BPRD more bridges build by developers could follow – perhaps not immediately, but at some future point. So, for the convenience of users, can you envision asphalt paving on the trails, rain shelters along the trail, restrooms, drinking fountains? An exaggeration now, but who knows? This along a “wild and scenic river” – please!

My neighbors and I welcome those who use the trails appropriately on both sides of the river. The essence of the river is preserved and enjoyed by their presence. What we do not want to witness is the loss of the river we cherish. Please do not allow the amendment. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Don M. Hartsough