

February 11, 2021

Hello Chair Whitt and Members of the Committee,

My name is Stephanie Noll and I'm testifying in support of House Bill 2171, Outdoor Life and Recreation for All, on behalf of the Oregon Trails Coalition and as a member of the now-completed Governor's Task Force on the Outdoors.

The Oregon Trails Coalition is a coalition of broad-based, statewide partners dedicated to the preservation, development, and stewardship of a statewide network of sustainable trails that provide access to outdoor recreation and active transportation for all.

Our advisory council includes representatives from more than twenty-five federal, state, and local agencies, trail user groups, outdoor industry and tourism partners, and volunteer organizations. We are also a proud member of the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund Coalition.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Oregonians have demonstrated that time in the outdoors is a lifeline during tough times. In my own family, I'm mom to two 10-year-old boys totally stressed out by online school and the sudden disruption to time spent daily playing with friends. But almost every Friday afternoon, I turn off my computer early, and my kids and I head to the trails in Forest Park. Under the trees, we all breathe a little deeper, and their imaginations take flight as they half run, half leap, half dance down the trail. When I wake my kids up on Friday mornings, instead of whining, they say, "It's fun Friday!"

All Oregonians deserve such a respite in their lives, a chance to breathe with the trees, move their bodies with joy, and find precious moments of peace and well being in the outdoors.

HB 2171 implements several recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on the Outdoors and the Governor's Racial Justice Council Environmental Equity Committee. HB 2171 strengthens the Office of Outdoor Recreation. This Office is critical for forwarding collaborative efforts between agencies, industry, and program partners to ensure equitable access to the outdoors for all. HB 2171 also strengthens the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund (OCRF), making it permanent and restoring the 1 million General Fund dollars removed from OCRF during 2020 pandemic budget cuts. Land managers in our Coalition have been overwhelmed caring for the outdoor places we hold dear as they strive to meet the impacts of Oregonians flocking to the outdoors. OCRF supports their work with critical investments in conservation, sustainable recreation, and access for diverse populations.

The bill's direction to study a single online storefront for recreation passes, to set design standards for recreation facilities, and to ensure diversity on advisory committees are all crucial steps toward making Oregon's parks, trails, and recreation sites equally welcoming and accessible to all Oregonians.

We hope to see this bill, in its entirety, move forward.  
Thank you for your time,  
Stephanie Noll,  
Oregon Trails Coalition