



Request for Matching Funds from the 2022 Oregon Legislature



The McKenzie River corridor community is in urgent need of economic and social recovery from the twin catastrophic effects of the devastating 2020 Holiday Farm Fire and COVID-19. **The McKenzie River Discovery Center (MRDC)** is on track to be 'shovel ready' by December 2022 and is capable of leading that recovery. It will attract as many as 50,000 visitors/year who will contribute as much as \$7,000,000/year to the area. Visitors will discover the unique geologic wonders of the river along with its

native fish and cultural history, inspiring regional and global river stewardship. Statewide travel spending fell in Oregon by almost half (49.5%) in 2020 with a 22% travel related job loss statewide. The MRDC will play a statewide leadership role in mitigating this loss and a local role in helping the McKenzie Valley build back better.

The McKenzie River Discovery Center will be a renowned destination attraction leading economic recovery for a community in need. Immersive exhibits will celebrate the magic of the one-of-a-kind McKenzie River with its geologic wonders, its famous rainbow 'McKenzie Redside' trout, spring Chinook salmon, and its cultural history. Public interpretive trails and an ADA accessible fishing lake will welcome tens of thousands of visitors/year who will contribute millions of dollars to the area/year. Aimed at attracting visitors both regionally and globally, the MRDC will inspire learning, entertainment, and land ethics; advancing earth stewardship and connecting visitors with seasonal recreation opportunities. Evolving exhibits centered around the main themes of hydrology/geology, quality water and native fish will be rooted in digital technology that can be shared around the world. This will be the first project of its kind in Oregon and is informed by a comparison of nine environmental centers including the Oregon Coast Aquarium, Columbia River Maritime Museum, Bend High Desert Museum, OMSI and the EPIC in Dublin, Ireland. Three historic buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places will host educational workshops, meeting space and hands-on learning for students, families, and community.

TIMING

Building Construction is scheduled to begin upon 80% completion of the \$18.5 million Capital Campaign. Remaining permits and approvals include: final site plan (winter 2022), final construction drawings (spring 2022), special use permit (summer 2022), building permits (fall 2022) and shovel ready end of 2022.

Grand opening will be summer of 2024.

THE LAND...THE TRIBE...THE WATER...THE HISTORY

Both implicit and explicit in our mission is a deep understanding and acknowledgement that we are gathered on the lands of tribal members who loved this place long before settlers arrived, and who love it still. The McKenzie River Discovery Center honors and respects this history as well as the ongoing life's work and native influence of the tribes in the Willamette Valley watershed and beyond. Embedded in the Discovery Center will be opportunities to learn of native histories through stories, artifacts, demonstrations, and hands-on experiences both virtual and real.

Learn more about these exhibits in our MRDC Pavilion document.

WHEN RIVERS THRIVE, PEOPLE THRIVE

The total cost of the MRDC is \$18.5 million of which \$2M is secured. Many private funding sources require campaigns to be 40% funded before participating, leaving the MRDC with an **immediate need of \$5.5 million 'seed money' from the State** to reach the forty percent threshold and fully execute the campaign.



PROJECT BUDGET

Estimated Project Cost

Construction/Renovation	4,000,000
Site Improvements	1,500,000
Land Acquisition	1,400,000
Architectural and Engineering Fees	2,600,000
Equipment	0
Contingencies	2,600,000
Other Costs (specify) Exhibit Hard Costs	4,000,000
Other Costs (specify) Non-Itemized Soft Costs	2,400,000
Estimated Total Project Costs	18,500,000

Amount Requested **5,500,000**

Percent of Total Project Cost **30%**

OPERATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

The MRDC has a sustainable business plan which addresses the long-term health of the Center. We expect our annual operating budget to be in the range of \$1.5 to \$2 million. Revenues will include memberships, ticket sales, events including educational & outdoor recreation workshops/curriculum, merchandise, and giving in the form of grants & donations. The expenses will include staffing requirements, program services to support the exhibits, curriculum & buildings and support services in management, fundraising, and general expenses.



Outdoor Programs

The historic Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery includes two commercial buildings with 5,000 sq ft of meeting space for a variety of outdoor programs.



Year Round Experience

In the Discovery Center, the salmon are spawning year round! Virtual experiences put you in the middle of the action each and every day.



Ecology of the River

Learn the importance of the abundant animal and plant life that makes the McKenzie River famous, including the Redside Rainbow Trout.



Water Management

How is your water managed and what part can you play to influence its future? From parking lot runoff to riparian zones, learn how to make a difference.

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