

Submitter: Stephanie Noll
On Behalf Of: Oregon Trails Coalition
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources
Measure: SB679

February 15th, 2023

Dear Chairs Golden and Girod and Members of the Committee:

I'm submitting this testimony on behalf of the Oregon Trails Coalition in support of SB 679 appropriating \$1 million to Oregon Parks and Recreation Department for continued development of the Oregon Coast Trail.

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, conservation advocates, and volunteer organizations. We represent walkers, bikers, hikers, runners, paddlers, equestrians, adaptive equipment users, skiers, snowmobilers, and motorized trail enthusiasts.

Our Coalition recently recognized the Oregon Coast Trail (OCT) as one of fifteen Oregon Signature Trails with the potential to provide Oregonians with world class experiences in their own backyards. The Oregon Coast Trail provides access from Oregon's coastal towns to old-growth rainforests, beautiful public beaches, and spectacular coastal bluff views of the rugged, cliff-lined Pacific Ocean. Currently the OCT also serves up harrowing experiences for walkers sharing Highway 101 with fast moving vehicles where the trail does not connect.

In 2017 the Oregon Legislature directed OPRD to develop an action plan (HB 3149) to address gaps along the OCT. Now, it is critical to implement that action plan. SB 679 takes a critical first step in appropriating \$1 million to Oregon Parks and Recreation Department for continued development of the Oregon Coast Trail. This state allocation is crucial match for possible future federal funding to address gaps in the trail.

Please make this investment now for Oregonians. We know from the most recent Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) that 74% of Oregonians report using local trails and more than half of Oregonians travel outside of their communities to access trails. The Oregon Coast Trail is one of our crown

jewels. Please act now to invest in closing its gaps to provide safe connections between the trail and Oregon towns.

Thank you for your leadership,

Stephanie Noll,
Coalition Director,
Oregon Trails Coalition