

April 26, 2023

## **The Issues Surround HB 3501**

Fire season is just around the corner and our area of Southern Oregon is in added danger from illegal fires started along the Bear Creek Greenway and downtown. Last year at this time we had the Pacific Pride fire that was started by arson and destroyed or damaged Carson Fuel Pacific Pride, General Equipment / Hotsy Inc, La Clinica, La Mota Medford, Sky High Smoke n' Accessories, Southern Oregon Printing, and Pacific Pride, dumping a large amount of oil and chemicals that found their way into Bear Creek near Hawthorne Park.

The areas of Hawthorne Park and Bear Creek Park under the I-5 overpass have been especially over-run by transient drug users, causing health and safety issues and major environmental concerns as trash and raw sewage find their way into Bear Creek.

Quote from RV Time article, 3-28-2023: "Medford resident Darrell Knox never imagined a bike ride with his 6-year-old daughter would end up exposing his child to everything from illegal drug use, piles of human waste and dirty needles to people having sex in broad daylight."

If Oregon HB 3501 passes and people are allowed to camp in all public spaces without controls or time limits, the garbage will pile up even more, businesses and homeowners will leave as they are already threatening to do, and the fire danger will escalate. We could easily have another Alameda Drive Fire level event... in Medford. As a fire survivor, I encourage you to think about this carefully and review my enclosed photos.

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Alameda Drive Fire survivor and the author of *Firestorm 2020*



Dams have been built in Bear Creek to illegally collect migrating Chinook salmon between Medford and Central Point

Photo credit: ODFW 2022



Pacific Pride Arson Fire 4-2022  
& the resulting oil and chemical damage to  
Bear Creek by Hawthorne Park





Piled up garbage left  
by  
Transient Campers  
along  
Bear Creek, Medford

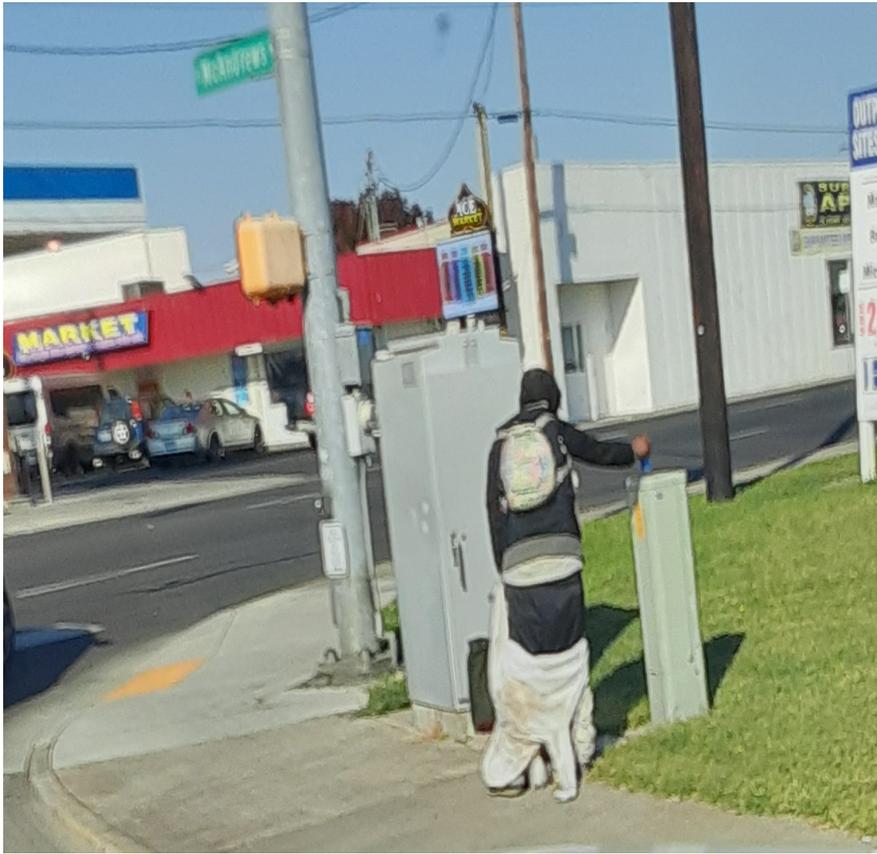
4-2023





Hawthorne Park  
2022 & 2023





Transient man peeing on a Medford street corner.

This has become a common sight throughout the city and parks;  
along with defecating on the sidewalk and in yards,  
whole-scale littering,  
stealing,  
blocked sidewalks and business entrances,  
drug users shooting up in public spaces,  
vandalism,  
violent, verbal abuse and aggressive panhandling,  
arson,  
and fires being started up against buildings.