



Support for -3 Recreational Immunity Fix Amendment to SB 1576

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee:

My name is Torsten Heycke and I am president of the Ashland Woodland and Trails Association (AWTA).

In recent years, the combination of the devastating Almeda fire and its consequent diminishing of the Rogue valley employee population and then the double-whammy of COVID resulted in greatly reduced Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF) productions and together those events resulted subsequently in the closure of many Ashland businesses. Since that time, our business community has looked for alternative ways to draw visitors to our tourist town. One of those alternative ways that is frequently touted is trail recreation.

The Ashland trail system is well known in the Pacific Northwest and California for hiking, mt biking and running. The design, building and maintaining of that trail system is predicated on recreational immunity. AWTA works closely with the City of Ashland Parks Recreation Commission to maintain trails. There is too much risk under the current arrangement.

- **Please pass SB 1576-3 with language that clearly restores recreational immunity for public and private landowners and clearly applies to both improved and unimproved trails**

Thanks for your consideration,

Torsten Heycke
President, Ashland Woodland and Trails Association