

HOOD RIVER COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS



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Joint Committee On Transportation

900 Court St. NE

Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support House Bill 3209, Abandoned Recreational Vehicle (RV) Disposal

Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain, Co-Vice-Chairs Starr and Boshart Davis, Members of the Joint Committee On Transportation,

Hood River County maintains roadways, parks, forestry and facilities. Our agency has removed abandoned RVs on all parts of Hood River County's system and have facilitated removal within Federal Forest Lands. With that, I urge the Committee to ensure the removal cost reimbursements can be made on all Public Lands, not only those within the Transportation Right of Way.

Abandoned RVs become a public nuisance and are a safety, environmental, and fire hazard. Being negligent stewards of our properties and leaving abandoned RVs in place encourages others to improperly dispose of RVs in the same manner. Abandoned RVs cost Hood River County thousands and eat up significant staff time and coordination of several departments to ensure proper removal and disposal each time. The time associated with removal diverts staff and law enforcement away from other valuable work.

Hood River County operate 3 County Campgrounds. During peak season, all available campsites are full. We have over 9,000 separate stays throughout the system within a year. The current RV fees help us maintain our campgrounds. Throughout the season, staff are collecting fees, cleaning bathrooms, cutting the grass, watching and maintaining hazardous trees, turning over camp sites during check in/check out times, etc. We have volunteer camp hosts at each of the campgrounds that assist staff with these tasks. With the cost of staffing and less revenue through the RV fees, we are considering adding volunteer camp hosts, limiting the ability to obtain local revenue, to maintain an appropriate level of serviceability.

At a time when many say there are not enough campgrounds in Oregon, a passage of this bill could make or break Hood River County's ability to maintain and staff County Campgrounds for the future. County budget funding sources continue to get squeezed and recreation funding is often the casualty. If Oregon is going to continue offering quality camping experiences, the RV funding must provide support local governments need to continue offering these important public outdoor experiences.

I urge you to pass House Bill 3209.

Thank you again to the Co-Chairs, Co-Vice-Chairs and members of the Joint Committee on Transportation for your time and consideration on this bill.

Sincerely,

Cori Wiessner, P.E.
Public Works Director
Hood River County