
From: Dennis O Bryant <dobryant1@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2018 6:48 PM
To: HAGNR Exhibits
Subject: HB 4029

Dear Committee Members:

I would like to register my strong opposition to HB 4029, the bill dealing with the hiking bridge over the Deschutes River. This bill is really a local issue, involving the citizens of Bend, who voted to add a trail crossing over the river, and some wealthy landowners who are afraid of their view being spoiled. Nothing else is really involved.

After a 36-year career in environmental and conservation issues, including mapping wildlife and other issues for the California Desert Wilderness Act and as an author of California's Draft Climate Change Policy, I can tell you that there are really no wildlife values to speak of that would be affected in the area where Bend Parks and Recreation would put their bridge. On the east side of the river, today there was significant blasting in preparation for the roads and utilities being put in as part of a major subdivision. On the west side, there are multimillion-dollar McMansions, bordered by a popular off-leash dog area.

It is unfortunate indeed that some conservation non-profits that I have respected have been co-opted by wealthy NIMBY's to support their bill. The idyllic canyon filled with river otters, elk, deer and other wildlife that they describe in their recent letter to the Bend Bulletin may indeed exist further upstream on the Deschutes, but to say those conditions exist in the vicinity of the planned bridge near River Vale Subdivision is either ignorant or intentionally misleading. I live adjacent to River Vale and am outside every day. I have not seen an elk for over five years, and have seen no deer, quail or river otters since the heavy equipment started building the subdivision infrastructure.

The wildlife issues are a canard, a NIMBY ploy to try and fool legislators who are not familiar with the site. Please do not cave in to the exclusive few who wish to keep the public away from public lands. Oppose HB 4029, allow the existing Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to be followed, and let the voter-approved bridge be built to serve Bend's hiking, outdoor and conservation communities.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dennis O'Bryant
19486 Golden Meadow Loop
Bend, Oregon