
From: Louise Hawker <lhawker@bendcable.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 7, 2018 12:54 PM
To: HAGNR Exhibits
Subject: Testimony in support of HB 4029

My name is Louise Hawker. I live on River Bend Drive in Bend. I strongly urge the committee to approve HB 4029 and ensure much-needed protection for the designated span of the Deschutes River. I have lived in my home on the Deschutes River slightly upstream from the proposed bridge location for 40 years. I am here to speak for the river and the wildlife. This beautiful natural area is a treasure that deserves protection. I love and respect the unspoiled river canyon and the wildlife that make it their home. Over the years, I have witnessed the wealth of wildlife that live and feed on this stretch, including bald eagles, osprey who return to the same snag every year to raise their young, several species of hawks and ducks, great horned owls, Canada geese, great blue heron, numerous other smaller birds, elk, deer, river otters, beavers, coyotes, bobcat and cougar. It would be a travesty to breach this beautiful canyon with a bridge, just for the sake of convenience, that will forever change its character. Further, wildfire is an ever-present danger, including the human-caused 1990 Awbrey Hall fire, in which I and others lost our homes, and seven years ago a fire in the vicinity of the east end of the proposed bridge. Bringing in more people will only heighten the risk of fire in this forest on both sides of the river. The river canyon in this stretch is essentially a roadless area, not accessible to fire trucks or construction equipment. The increasing urbanization of Bend makes it even more imperative that we remain vigilant about protecting and preserving the natural environment. Thank you.