

## Hamre Jaime

---

**From:** michael tripp <trippm10@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 13, 2018 1:46 PM  
**To:** HAGNR Exhibits  
**Subject:** HB 4029 public comment

I wish to register my support for HB 4029.

I am on the board of directors for several environmental river oriented NGOs currently, and previously served in this capacity on several other fishery oriented and land use oriented NGOs in Central Oregon. My comments are my individual opinions and not those of these NGOs. This has been an educational experience, and I now have a deep appreciation for the complexities of environmental issues in the Deschutes basin. The issue of a new bridge on the Deschutes River south of Bend, and the challenges of recreational access to public lands, illustrate the complexities of balancing recreational use with stewardship of this valuable public resource.

Appreciation of this led to designation of the Deschutes River above Bend both as a State Scenic Waterway and as a Federal Wild and Scenic River decades ago. A management plan was finalized in 1996, with an impressive long list of signatories from governmental, agency, community and tribal stakeholders. Proponents for bridge crossings were active then. Review of river crossing issues by this complicated and robust process led to prohibition of new bridges or river crossings in addition to the usual restrictions on development in selected river reaches.

Proponents for a bridge persisted in their efforts however, which led Bend Parks and Recreation to request an amendment to the administrative rule prohibiting bridges in 2015. The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department denied this request after holding public hearings in 2015/2016. OPRD wisely went beyond this and contracted with Community Solutions of Central Oregon to facilitate further evaluation through the Upper Deschutes Advisory Group. Their report describes holding 22 UDAG related "forums" before issuing their final report on May 5, 2017. This process led OPRD to issue their final denial of the rule amendment request.

The history illustrates how bridge proponents have not accepted the decisions of the OPRD, and campaigns persist to this day as illustrated by the barrage of editorials the editorial board of the Bend Bulletin has published. Community interest groups have therefore felt it is desirable to have stronger support for State Scenic Waterways, both in terms of avoidance of precedent setting weakening of waterways protection and also in terms of protection of the public resource in this specific case of a bridge proposal. State Scenic Waterway protections are meant to elevate stewardship to a higher level, a level that protects the resource from special interest impacts. In this case it is a bridge, but in other cases it could be mining, or resort development, for example.

HB 4029 moves protection of the Deschutes River to a statutory level, beyond the current administrative rule level of protection. By putting to bed the divisive controversies over the bridge proposal, HB 4029 will facilitate refocusing of

Central Oregonians on high priority challenges related to management of our public resources in the face of the areas rapid growth, while also reaffirming the processes supporting State Scenic Waterways protections.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this governance process.

Sincerely,



Michael R Tripp, M.D.

1020 NW Foxwood Pl

Bend Oregon 97703

email: [trippm10@gmail.com](mailto:trippm10@gmail.com)

phone: 541-312-2193