



February 21, 2019

Senate Committee On Environment and Natural Resources  
Co-Chairs Senator Dembrow, Vice Chair Senator Olsen  
900 Court Street NE, Room HR C  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**RE: SUPPORT FOR SB 448**

Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Olsen, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Oregon Outdoors, I write today in support of SB 448. Oregon Outdoors ([www.oregonoutdoors.org](http://www.oregonoutdoors.org)) is a recently-established and rapidly growing coalition of more than thirty outdoor recreation businesses, recreation organizations, and conservation groups committed to the preservation of Oregon's outdoor assets for future generations.

Our coalition has established a common set of legislative priorities that seek to protect and expand outdoor recreation access and infrastructure, promote the outdoor recreation economy in Oregon, and support responsible recreation -- including funding for SAR services that are often fiscally strained as they work to serve both visitors and residents who participate at an increasing frequency in outdoor recreation in our state.

SB 448 is a placeholder bill, the content for which will come from in-session conversations and collaboration. As this collaboration progresses, we expect that SB 448 will provide pathway to accomplish the following outcomes:

- (1) Establish a voluntary fee to help fund SAR transport, equipment, and training, and
- (2) Identify and make any statutory changes needed to implement agreed-upon recommendations related to SAR operations.

In regards to SAR operations, Oregon Outdoors hopes considerations will include:

- Review of past search and rescue incidents as well as outdoor recreation usage data to better understand and project foreseeable future SAR needs/costs.
- Examination of possible funding mechanisms to cover projected needs with a focus on equitable cost recovery.
- Review of SAR policies/practices from other states that may benefit operations in Oregon.
- Identification of policies that may unintentionally hinder SAR operations and/or unnecessarily increase costs to SAR units.
- Exploration of opportunities for innovation, collaboration, and new technology to improve upon current practices.

Working together with the Sheriffs and other interests, we seek collaborative and innovative solutions to improve SAR and ultimately a broader array of recreational response to better serve communities who rely on these services, from highly skilled recreationists to a growing number of relatively unskilled visitors of outdoor destinations in our state.

We thank you for the opportunity to write testimony about this important issue and for your time.

Sincerely,

*Hugh Morrison*

Hugh Morrison  
Network Coordinator - Oregon Outdoors

# Oregon Outdoors Members



outdoor project



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