



Oregon Legislature House Special Committee on Wildfire Recovery

Re: Wildfire Recovery Public Hearings

Submitted to: hwrec.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Chair Clem, Vice-chairs Lewis and Marsh, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on wildfire recovery following the Labor Day fires of 2020. While Deschutes County did not suffer loss of life or destruction of structures during the fires the State of Oregon experienced in September 2020, we did, along with so many other areas throughout the state, suffer through several days of extremely hazardous levels of smoke.

Unfortunately, 2020 is not an outlier in terms of wildfire smoke in Central Oregon. One of the largest events held in Deschutes County, the Sisters Folk Festival, has now permanently moved the event from September to October because of the continued need to cancel the event due to unhealthy wildfire smoke. Travel Oregon estimated that Deschutes County businesses lost an estimated \$15.8 million dollars in tourism related revenue during the 2017 wildfire season, due in large part to the thick smoke that blanketed the area.

Of course lost tourism revenue and the associated economic impacts are but one of many impacts we all experience each time we are inundated with smoke. Small smoke particles permeate deep into the lungs and can cause lasting health effects. Outdoor activities are all but eliminated. Even in communities distant from the actual fire impacts of smoke can be serious and long lasting.

How will the state of Oregon prepare for, respond to and recover from wildfire, so the most disastrous impacts can be avoided in the future? I urge you to consider impacts of smoke to local communities as this legislative session proceeds.

Sincerely,

Deschutes County Commissioner Patti Adair