



April 23, 2021

Joint Ways and Means Committee, April 22 Public Hearing

Re: McKenzie River Discovery Center (MRDC) Request for \$6.5 M of American Rescue Plan Act Funds

Dear Co-Chairs and Members,

If I was called upon to testify last evening during the two hour and fifteen minute hearing, I would have shared the following information.

After fourteen years of dreaming, planning and collaborating, the MRDC is a vital cog in the McKenzie River community. We hosted and assisted the Vida Relief Center, FEMA, the Lane County Sherriff and Lane County Regulators immediately after the fire and continue to do so as requested.

We are now requesting \$6.5 M of the available ARPA money to help fund our state and federal fundraising targets for building a world class, hands-on and virtual edutainment interpretive center. Please see <https://mckenziediscoverycenter.org/>.

Your assistance in helping us finance the construction of this one-time opportunity to kick-start the recovery of the McKenzie River Valley after the fire will benefit Oregonians and a world-wide virtual audience.

Our Board of Directors has authorized the formation of a "sustainability committee" to plan now for fundraising events that will cover the shortfall in operating revenues to administer the facility during the 99 years of our lease term.

The \$6.5 M we are requesting, combined with the \$2 M in property, contributions and pledges we have already secured, will put us in a prime position to start our silent capital campaign. We do not plan to start construction of the 10,000 square foot interpretive center – museum until we have secured 85% of the cost for the building and exhibits.



MCKENZIE RIVER DISCOVERY CENTER

The terrible September 2020 fire created a “crisis of opportunity.” Please help us seize this opportunity and resurrect the McKenzie River community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Hoyt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" that loops around the first part of the name.

Thomas H. Hoyt, President
McKenzie River Discovery Center

thoyt@mrdiscoverycenter.org

phone: 541-687-8700

Mailing Address: 1200 Executive Parkway, Suite 320
Eugene, OR 97401