

The Friends of the Oregon Caves and Chateau is a non-profit organization cooperating with the National Park Service (NPS) in the preservation, stewardship and improvement of the cultural and natural resources of the Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve.



May 5, 2023

Co-Chairs Senator Fred Girod and Representative Paul Holvey
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Capital Construction
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Co-chairs Senator Fred Girod, Representative Paul Holvey and Members of the Oregon Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction,

Today I am writing on behalf of the **Friends of the Oregon Caves and Chateau** to thank you for your consideration of the important state of projects you have in your committee for funding through the 2023-25 Cultural Resources Economic Fund (CREF). This slate was reviewed and prioritized by the Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon (CACO) and reflects many important cultural programs throughout the state of Oregon. In large and small communities, each of these programs make a difference to the local citizens and to those who come from other areas to support the wide range of natural and cultural offerings.

The organization I represent, the **Friends of the Oregon Caves and Chateau**, is a non-profit founded in 2007. We are an official partner cooperating with the National Park Service on the preservation, stewardship and improvement of the cultural and natural resources of the Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve located in rural Josephine County between Grants Pass and the Oregon Coast. Our mission is to protect the splendor of the 113 old monument, the wonder of the spectacular cave, and restore the grandeur and maintain the integrity of the 89 year old National Historic Landmark Lodge – the **Oregon Caves Chateau**.

Our CREF project is a request for \$455,690 to restore and repair the 97 doors, hardware and screens, original to the Chateau. The Chateau is currently under restoration with support from the National Park Service for Life, Safety, Accessibility, Seismic and Stabilization upgrades needed to assure the visitors can enjoy their visit for another 89 years. The Friends are responsible for the restoration of the Historic Integrity of the lodge as the NPS funding will not cover that. The Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve and it's National Historic Landmark Lodge are the main economic driver for this remote region of Oregon. Over 120,000 visitors enjoy the Cave tours and stay at the Lodge each year. With the restoration of the Chateau – this number is expected to rise to at least 200,000. The Monument supports the small community of Cave Junction with a population of 1,100 with the employment of over 75 individuals – which will increase once the Chateau is back on line after the restoration is complete.

We are pleased to be one of the prioritized projects and urge your subcommittee to support the full slate of projects. Thank you so much for your consideration of our request.

Warm regards,

Sue Densmore
Executive Director

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