



County Surveyor
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RE: Josephine County Urges Support for House Bill 3175, Public Land Corner Preservation Program Modernization

Chair Tran, Vice-Chairs Grayber and Lewis, Members of the House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Josephine County has 1,642 square miles, and every half mile of land has a public land corner, or “controlling land corner” marked by a monument that sets the boundaries of all properties in the state. That gives Josephine County approximately 3,268 monuments to track, maintain, repair, and replace.

From the first stone monument set by the federal government in 1851 to today’s metal markers, Public Land Corners have been aged, damaged, moved, and disturbed. And since Josephine County’s founding on January 22, 1856, our county surveyors have been excavating, repairing, replacing, and perpetuating monuments, many in their original position, to preserve the system that holds up all of Josephine County’s property boundaries. When corners are destroyed or improperly placed, every landowner’s property lines become less certain.

The cost of managing public land corners has increased significantly as the pace of development, labor costs, a struggling housing market and inflation have not kept up with revenue sources. In 1985, the Oregon State Legislature created the Public Land Corner Preservation (PLCP) Fund in ORS 203.148. Supported by document recording fees that are currently capped at \$10 per document that is recorded, PLCP Funds are statutorily restricted for use only for costs incurred and authorized by the county surveyor for establishment, re-establishment, and maintenance of controlling property corners in the county.

House Bill 3175 removes the cap on document recording fees for the PLCP Fund, allowing counties to establish fees based on local needs. An adequately funded corner program benefits all Oregonians and furthers the legislature’s policy goals related to housing and emergency management.

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Sincerely,

Peter D. Allen, PLS
Josephine County Surveyor