

Submitter: Michael Neunzert
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB179

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee.

I volunteer for the Salmonberry Trail Foundation as a Board Member and as chair of the Planning and Construction Committee. As you know, the Salmonberry Trail is an 82-mile long rails-to-trails project. We hope to open the first section of trail in 2025!

Fixing the Oregon Recreational Immunity law is critical to opening the Salmonberry trail. The short term law passed in the last session needs to be made permanent, by SB179, so that we can open the trail for all Oregonians to enjoy.

However, as a trail that will have both transportation uses, and recreational uses, it is critical that the subjective intent loophole is ultimately eliminated. Trail users who are on the trail for transportation purposes (peddling to the coast) and users walking or riding recreationally are indistinguishable. It should not matter why someone is on the trail when determining liability issues.

Again, I want to reiterate, SB 179 as it is, is vitally important! I realize that this session might not be the time to solve all the recreational immunity problems. We look forward to working with members of the legislature in the future to protect all trail uses.

Michael Neunzert
Salmonberry Trail Foundation
Board Member
Chair, Planning and Construction Committee