

March 17, 2025

Subject: Rogue Siskiyou Regional Wildfire Training Center (RSR)

To: The Oregon House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government & Veterans

Dear Honorable Chair Tran & Honorable Vice-Chairs Lewis & Grayber -

I'm writing today to provide support for HB 3366, and the Rogue Siskiyou Regional Wildfire Training Center (RSR). This bill would support proactive work on the wildfire crisis in our state. Last year 1,956 fires burned just short of 2 million acres, costing Oregon over \$350 million dollars in fire suppression alone. In the past few years, the loss of human life and property in our state (not to mention the loss of our precious salmon stocks and beautiful wildlife) to wildfire is virtually incalculable.

HB 3366 will help construct the Rogue Siskiyou Regional Wildfire Training Center (RSR) in Curry County. This would be Oregon's first facility dedicated to training wild land wildfire fighters, with the capacity to train up to 1,500 wildfire cadets a year.

RSR will additionally have the capability of serving as a Southern Oregon wildfire command center and as a base for rapid response helicopter hand crews. Several major fires could have been stopped the past few seasons with the capability to immediately get hand crews on top of wilderness fires. RSR will additionally have the ability to provide critical food service and shelter support for both wildfire fighters and wildfire victims. RSR will have a statewide recruitment program to attract young women and men across our state to this vital and rewarding career.

In the off-season RSR could also serve as a base for focused fuel reduction crews, especially if related funding is awarded through recent funding proposals submitted by the Wild Rivers Coast Forest Collaborative and Curry County in recent months. These funds would increase retention of firefighters year-round and improve the statewide workforce for fuels reduction and fire suppression.

In addition, RSR's defense of Oregon lives, lands, and property can help turn the tide against losing more fire insurance carriers in our state. Passing HB 3366 and building RSR would be a positive, proactive step to improve landscape and community resilience.

Thank you for your support of this critical bill.

Sincerely,

Tabatha Rood
Collaborative Director
Wild Rivers Coast Forest Collaborative

