



Tillamook County Board of Commissioners

201 Laurel Avenue, Tillamook, OR 97141

Phone: 503-842-3403

Erin D. Skaar, Chair
Paul Fournier, Vice-Chair
Mary Faith Bell, Commissioner

March 31, 2025

Dear Co-Chairs Girod and Nosse and Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction,

I am writing to express my strong support for the continued development of the **Salmonberry Trail**. This trail holds tremendous potential for improving public health, strengthening local economies, and increasing access to the outdoors for communities across Oregon.

As a Tillamook County Commissioner, I've seen firsthand how trails can serve as essential infrastructure—providing opportunities for physical activity, community connection, and sustainable tourism. With its route stretching from the coast through rural valleys and forested canyons, the Salmonberry Trail has the unique ability to connect diverse communities while showcasing some of Oregon's most iconic landscapes.

We know Oregonians want and use trails. In 2022, most residents reported participating in non-motorized trail-related activities such as walking, hiking, biking, dog-walking, and using mobility devices. These were the most popular forms of recreation statewide, accounting for more than 100 million user occasions. People have also made it clear they want more connected and accessible trail systems, especially ones that accommodate hand cycles and trail chairs, and that support safe walking and biking routes between parks.

Investing in the Salmonberry Trail is an investment in public health. Physical activity reduces chronic disease, improves mental well-being, and strengthens social bonds. The trail's accessibility for people of All ages and abilities will make it a valuable resource for locals' everyday use and a visitor destination.

Furthermore, the economic benefits of trails like the Salmonberry are well documented. Local businesses, small towns, and tourism economies stand to gain significantly as more people explore the region on foot, bike, or horseback. This trail also reinforces our commitment to environmental stewardship, with strong public support for promoting low-impact recreation.

The Salmonberry Trail is a vital project that reflects the needs and values of Oregonians. I urge continued investment in its development and expansion.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Erin Skaar". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Erin" and last name "Skaar" clearly legible.

Erin Skaar, Chair
Tillamook County Board of Commissioners