



August 11, 2025

Holly Jewkes, Forest Supervisor, c/o Alicia Bergschneider
Deschutes National Forest
63095 Deschutes Market Road, Bend, OR, 97701

FIRE ADMINISTRATION

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Bend, OR 97702

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Melanie Kebler

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Megan Perkins

CITY COUNCILORS

Ariel Méndez
Gina Franzosa
Megan Norris
Mike Riley
Steve Platt

CITY MANAGER

Eric King

FIRE CHIEF

Todd Riley

To Holly Jewkes, Forest Supervisor, c/o Alicia Bergschneider,

On behalf of Bend Fire & Rescue, I am writing to express strong support for the City of Bend Outback Site Conveyance, as reflected in the Environmental Assessment.

The Forest Service's land conveyance to the City is a necessary step toward critical infrastructure improvements needed to maintain delivery of safe drinking water and reliable water for fighting fires. Approximately 60% of the City's annual supply is surface water from the Bend Municipal Watershed located in the Deschutes National Forest. This is the same water we use to fight fire in Bend.

Bend Fire & Rescue is interested in the subsequent, future uses of that conveyed land. For example, a pre-treatment facility will reduce water turbidity during wildfires, flooding, and rain/snow melt events. A Pre-treatment system would help ensure the City's Water Filtration Facility membrane filters continue operating optimally and continuously, even during severe weather events. Also, a proposed wildfire water fill station would allow us and other firefighting agencies to better protect our community in a more efficient way.

Established in 1905, Bend Fire & Rescue is the largest fire department in Oregon east of the Cascade Mountains. We are a full-time paid municipal fire department that serves the residents and visitors of Bend and the neighboring Deschutes County Rural Fire Protection District #2. We respond to incidents 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and provide fire and emergency medical services, respond to all risks and hazards in the community, and provide ambulance

transport within the greater ambulance service area. The risks to our water system are heightened during the summer months, the same period our water system experiences peak demand. This is a recipe for disaster. Currently, during a turbidity event, the Water Filtration Facility must shut down to

protect the filtration membranes that would quickly become overwhelmed by excess sediment in the water. That results in a significant reduction in available water which would immediately impact Bend Fire & Rescue's ability to fight the fires that threaten the watershed and our community.

I respectfully request your support for the City of Bend Outback Site Conveyance to help us protect and serve this community.

Sincerely,



Todd Riley, Fire Chief



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