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November 13, 2007

**Sent via fax to: (503) 378-4844**

Oregon Department of State Lands  
775 Summer Street NE  
Suite 100  
Salem, OR 97301-1279

**Re: South Redmond Tract Land Use Management Plan**

Ladies/Gentlemen:

I am a resident of Deschutes County, Oregon and have lived in the Redmond area for the past 30 years. I am familiar with the property that was acquired by the Department of State Lands as I have worked on this property with the Bureau of Land Management for land use planning for this area back in the 1980's. At that time I was City Attorney for the City of Redmond. I have also worked on the land adjacent to this as Mayor for the City of Redmond between 1999 and 2001. I appreciate the effort that has been put into the plan by the Department in conjunction with Cogan Owens Cogan, LLC as well as SERA Architects, Century West Engineering, Johnson-Gardner, LLC and Angelo Planning Group.

As I indicated at the hearing, it can be well anticipated that circumstances during the planning period for this property could change significantly so there should be very definitive language that, although these are desirable land use plans, they are subject to revision based upon developing circumstances as well as changes in the political, economic and environmental climate of Central Oregon.

As was discussed at the hearing on November 6, 2007, there is a need to address the long-term goals of both Deschutes County and the City of Redmond for enhanced recreational opportunities in this area. The relocation of the water park, the expansion of the Deschutes County Fairground and expansion of the Juniper Golf Course all make sense and can actually enhance the value for the remainder of the property and assist the Department in utilizing additional monies for common school fund. Of particular interest to me is the expansion of the Juniper Golf Course. As the City Attorney, I helped initiate the process to relocate the Juniper Golf Course from its former location north of the Redmond Airport to its current location. I am a strong advocate for making golf affordable particularly to our seniors and juniors who are on limited income. The purpose of the Juniper Golf Course was, in part, to meet that objective. Juniper Golf Course now provides a recreational amenity that is available to all citizens and has been heavily used by seniors and juniors over the years.

The current Juniper Golf Course is very popular and has seen heavy traffic since its opening in 2005. With our growing population here in Central Oregon, I anticipate the use of Juniper Golf Course to increase steadily over the next 10 years. It would be very reasonable to assume that there will be a need for expansion of this recreational opportunity within the next 10 to 15 years. Based upon my experience

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it takes about 10 years to get from an initial concept to the opening of a golf course.

I strongly recommend that the State Land Board consider expansion of the Juniper Golf Course as a high priority in its management plan. While at first blush the Board may think this will not adequately enhance the school fund, I believe there are opportunities out there wherein a win-win situation for both public recreation and a school fund can be obtained. For example, expansion of 18 holes with development space in between some of those holes for a hotel, overnight cottages, and commercial or industrial space, would actually enhance the value of those lands within the perimeter of the golf course and result in strong revenues for the common school fund as well as providing an expanded recreational opportunity for the citizens of, and visitors to, Central Oregon. This could be achieved through a collaborative effort by the City of Redmond, Department of State Lands and a private developer to create that opportunity over the course of the next 10 years. Quite frankly it would be much quicker to get the golf course situated within the Redmond UGB, perhaps with a hotel, than it would be if only residential/commercial development were pursued. Once the property is within those boundaries, the availability of land for commercial industrial opportunities might be easier in the near term rather than the long term. The reason for that is that a large part of that land would be dedicated for open space (the golf course) and would not detract from inventories for commercial or industrial properties.

Further, the need for Pronghorn to extend 19<sup>th</sup> Street to Pronghorn will probably arise within the next 10 years. Coupled with the expansion of the golf course and the location of a hotel and perhaps some other commercial uses could trigger a good time for inclusion in the urban growth boundaries for this portion of the property and thus may realize to the common school fund monies at a quicker pace than if the land was just subject to normal expansion for commercial and/or residential development.

Regarding residential development, I do agree that there are limitations because of the proximity of this property to the Redmond Airport. While I do believe that there will be opportunities for residential development at the south end of this property, I think that portion of the property toward the north and adjacent to Juniper Golf Course would be less desirable for residential development given the issues concerning the airport safety zone. Expansion of the golf course together with overnight accommodations both in the form of hotel and cottages may make more sense in the long run and could still generate healthy revenues for the common school fund.

I thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Very truly yours,

Edward P. Fitch

EPF/mcm

cc: Juniper Golf Course Board  
Redmond City Council

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