

September 9, 2015

**Oregon Board of Forestry**

Oregon Department of Forestry  
Salem Headquarters  
2600 State Street  
Salem, Oregon 97310

Members of the Board of Forestry:

The Sunset Empire Park & Recreation District (SEPRD) will benefit from a timber management plan for the Northwest State Forests that will protect our beautiful forest lands while also ensuring a level of active management that will increase revenue into counties and county programs like ours.

SEPRD was formed in February 14, 1969. It remained a Park & Recreation District in name only for the next eight years while the community raised enough funds to build Sunset Pool, the foundation of SEPRD. Over the years, the District has added facilities such as Broadway Park, the Seaside Youth Center and the Bob Chisholm Community Center, broadening its ability to meet the needs of an ever-changing demand for quality aquatic, recreational, youth and senior-oriented services and programming. We play a role in keeping our community's kids safe, our residents healthy and our seniors engaged and active.

From the beginning, securing adequate funding to cover our program and facility/equipment needs has been a challenge. We do not live in a wealthy community and cannot get by on usage fees alone. In fact, we have started the district scholarship program, supported by the foundation in order to ensure widespread access for all residents. We are proud to say that last year we helped over 440 children, youth, adults and seniors have access to safe, quality aquatic, recreational and youth services.

Given the state of our local and regional economy and the primary individuals and families that we aim to serve, we rely on a combination of funding from property taxes (from residents within district boundaries), participation fees, donations and timber tax revenue. Were we to consider any special or capital projects, we would be limited to public bonding as our primary choice for raising additional funds. Those funds, at this time, are desperately needed to continue providing a reasonably high level of service and facilities and impacting lives in the way that we desire. Again, given the overall economic condition of our community, successful bond efforts are difficult to achieve.

Timber funds do come to our organization and they are incredibly valuable but their fluctuation and intermittence make them difficult to project, and, thereby, rely upon. I understand that this



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# SUNSET EMPIRE

## PARK + RECREATION DISTRICT

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Board is charged with managing our state forests for the greatest overall economic, environmental and social value. Please understand that any increased funding that comes to our organization via timber harvest will help us enhance service and expand access to that service.

Please give careful consideration to how your decision regarding state forestlands will impact our organization and those we serve.

Sincerely,

Skyler Archibald

Executive Director

Sunset Empire Park & Recreation District