



November 13, 2017

Oregon Smoke Management Review Committee
2600 State Street
Salem, Oregon 97310

To the Oregon Smoke Management Review Committee:

On behalf of the City of Sisters, we would like to voice our support for the increased use of safe and effective prescribed burning in Central Oregon's forests. This summer's fires near Sisters demonstrated the importance of prescribed fire as an effective tool to reduce wildfire risk to our community and the people that live, work, and play in our forests.

We know that in order to increase the use of prescribed fire we need meaningful reforms to Oregon's smoke management rules. The recommendations from the Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project represent a viable strategy that would enable greater use of prescribed fire to counter the trend towards larger and increasingly severe wildfires, and the serious social, economic, and ecological impacts those wildfires cause in our forests and communities.

We recognize that increased prescribed fire may lead to an increase in short-term smoke impacts in our community, we also recognize the need to fight wildfires before they happen. The City of Sisters supports applying prescribed fire strategically in the forests around our community to reduce the likelihood of severe wildfires (and their smoke) that last for weeks in the summer and have far-reaching negative consequences on public health, local economies, and the long-term resilience of our forests.

Ultimately, we support a more holistic solution to prescribed fire and smoke management than what is currently provided by state policy. We believe that the short-term impacts of prescribed fire will be far less than the impacts of wildfire. While we may be reducing near-term exposure to smoke by limiting prescribed fire now, it comes at the expense of future Oregonians who will face increasingly severe wildfires and wildfire smoke. We ask that you carefully consider strategies to increase the use of prescribed fire while protecting air quality and the health of our communities in the long run.

Respectfully,

Chuck Ryan
Mayor