

Justin R. Price
3274 Mystic Lane
Eugene, OR, 97405
July 24, 2019

Oregon Department of Forestry
Board of Forestry
2600 State Street
Salem, OR, 97310

Dear Oregon Department of Forestry:

My name is Justin Price and I reside at Mystic Lane in Eugene Oregon. I am here to speak with you about the role Disciples of Dirt fulfils in the community regarding forestry, forest management and community connections. I am a board member of the Disciple of Dirt and serve as the treasure of this organization. The Disciples of Dirt Mountain Bike Club boasts members from all over the Pacific Northwest and beyond, we focus our efforts within Oregon's Southern Willamette Valley. Our club was founded and the majority of our membership live and ride in this region. Our members share a passion for mountain biking. The Disciples of Dirt are well known within the community for being stewards of our local trails and champions for improved trail access for cyclists. The Disciples of Dirt is also tax-exempt 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

We provide volunteer hours for trail work for the region. As of this morning, we have logged more than 2,700 hours of labor-hours within in our region of care. This work includes clearing the winter storm blow-down, removing fallen trees from roadways, building repair section of trail damage and building new routes for more sustainable trail.

A recent highlight project is the re-route of a floodplain restoration plan at the confluence of Coal Creek and the Middle Fork of the Willamette, volunteers spent the weekend working on a reroute of the Middle Fork Trail. In partnership with the Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council and the USFS, volunteers from the Disciples of Dirt, and others built a beautiful new section of trail winding through the woods. Sawyers working on incredibly steep terrain, cleared a corridor over Coal Butte in preparation for the second half of the reroute to be constructed later this summer.

Disciples of Dirt's slogan is "Let us Ride". This slogan highlights the biggest challenge we face and the ideas we have around forest management. It also speaks to how we approach the relationships with land managers.

Many of our members have a personal connection with the forest industry. Personally I am a principal and owner of a consulting engineering firm employing nearly 100 individuals. We specialize in the design, engineering and construction of wood products manufacturing facilities.

Our members understand the true meaning of sustainable forest management, where land managers are faced with the difficult task of balancing the three main pillars of ecological, economical and socio-cultural requirements. Our ultimate goal is to have a voice in the development of harvesting and use plans. We do not seek to halt the harvest plans. We only want to make sure that the harvest plans incorporate the opportunity for recreational use by our members. When harvest plans are on or near our existing trail networks, we seek to have the harvest plans recognize the historical use of the trails and to consider the experience our members are seeking once the harvest is completed. We work diligently within the process the land managers have for providing public comment and providing our assessments of the harvest plans. We focus our comments on the long-term impact to existing trail access and tread. We try to find reasonable grounds for the harvest plans to include the repair of the existing trail or the incorporation of new trails for the areas we have access.

Two of the most prevalent examples of this work are the Carpenter Trail By-pass system in Lorane, OR and Thurston Hills Nature Area in Springfield, OR. The Carpenter Trail By-pass is a typical checkerboard ownership common in western Oregon. Access to this area is contingent on the recreation easements which can be a significant management issue both at a local and national level. The current access into this trail network is good example of the right of way agreements between a private landowner and the BLM. These trails have been developed, built and maintained by our members for nearly 30 years. For the recent harvest activity here we provided comments to BLM addressing the repair and possible alternative harvest plans to accommodate the trail closures and method. These comments were largely accepted by the BLM and we believe a great example of how we worked within the BLM's goals to meet the needs of all parties involved.

The Thurston Hill Nature Area is shining example of our members rallying to bring in nearly \$13,000 in donations in addition to the near 4,000 volunteer hours for trail construction and maintenance of this network. We have also pledged additional hours for the next phase of trail being constructed on this site next year.

These project illustrate our willingness to work with the land managers. We develop memos of understanding in order to meet the needs they have for allowing our member to gain access to ride our bikes. As an organization and as part of the culture of the mountain bike community, we emphasize the need for our members to be involved in the trail work in order to provide the access we desire. Our main message to the land managers is let us ride. In return, the land managers gain a community partner who is willing to build and maintain the trails we all can enjoy.

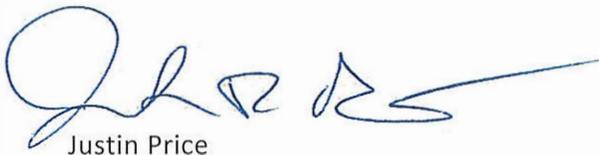
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As you continue to execute on the mission of the Board in leading Oregon in implementing policies and programs that promote sustainable management of Oregon's public and private forests, we only ask that you remember that the community partnerships between volunteer organizations such as the Disciples of Dirt stand at the ready to help implement the shared vision. We understand the forest benefits they provide in the ecological, economical and socio-cultural requirements and are actively looking for way to support the Board of Forestry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Justin Price", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Justin Price

Treasure, Disciples of Dirt