



Board of Commissioners

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Bev Clarno
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November 27, 2006

Oregon Department of Forestry
Richard Gipson, Hearing Officer

RE: The Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act of 1997 (Senate Bill 360)

Dear Mr. Gipson,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the "Issue Paper" regarding treatment of vacant lots under Senate Bill 360. We appreciate the thorough staff work completed by the Advisory Committee which provides outstanding background and, most importantly, context to the issue. We are not surprised that Deschutes County appears to again be leading change – on this occasion regarding the vacant lot issue – and believe the proposed alternative is the best option, given the original intent of Senate Bill 360 and the evolution of wildland fire in Oregon and the United States.

We support the additional flexibility given to the local classification committees and look forward to assisting and continuing to be a participating partner with the administrative rules which will enable implementation. We also support the option of requiring wider fuel breaks along certain egress/ingress routes. This has been a common theme in the six Community Fire Plans various neighborhoods, communities and agencies have completed in Deschutes County.

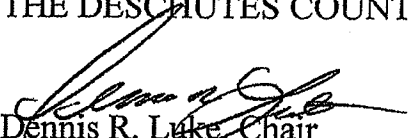
We have additionally reviewed the remaining alternatives the Advisory Group considered, and agree that the "problems the solutions cause" are good reasons for selecting the preferred alternative.

Wildland fire is no stranger to Central Oregon. Over the past 106 years we averaged 452 fires and 38,000 acres and, almost without exception, our responses have been interagency and involved the wildland urban interface. This trend will continue and the ability to work collaboratively with all agencies to minimize the loss of human life and property must be our goal.

We look forward to implementation and Joe Stutler, Deschutes County Forester, will be our contact with this effort. He can be reached by telephone at (541) 322.717 or via e-mail at joest@co.deschutes.or.us.

Sincerely,


THE DESCHUTES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Dennis R. Luke, Chair



Bev Clarno, Commissioner



Michael M. Daly, Commissioner