

Exhibit F

**Supplemental
Public Correspondence Received as of
August 5, 2021**

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

From: BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW
Sent: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 3:35 PM
To: BORISCH, ROXIE
Subject: FW: Sierra Club letter to ODFW about a NE Oregon land acquisition
Attachments: 8_3_2021 Letter re_ ODFW Minam River Wildlife Area Acquisition.pdf

From: Debra Higbee-Sudyka <dwhigbes@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 12:50 PM
To: COMMISSION ODFW * ODFW <ODFW.COMMISSION@odfw.oregon.gov>; INFO odfw * ODFW <odfw.INFO@odfw.oregon.gov>
Cc: Oregon Conservation Committee <OREGON-CONSERVATION-COMMITTEE@lists.sierraclub.org>
Subject: Sierra Club letter to ODFW about a NE Oregon land acquisition

Dear Director Melcher and Commissioners,

The Oregon Chapter of the Sierra Club has written [a letter](#) (attached) expressing support and a concern regarding the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife's acquisition of lands along the Minam River in Northeast Oregon.

We appreciate the opportunity to give comments, and would be happy to answer any questions.

Thank you,
Debra

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Debra Higbee-Sudyka *she/her/hers*
Chair, Conservation Committee
Oregon Chapter Sierra Club
Cell: 541-554-6979
ConservationCommittee@oregon.sierraclub.org
<http://oregon2.sierraclub.org/chapter>



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August 3, 2021

Director Curt Melcher and Commissioners
Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, Oregon 97302

Re: Support for Minam River Wildlife Area Acquisition

Director Melcher and Commissioners,

On behalf of Sierra Club's 75,000 Oregon Chapter members and supporters, we are writing in support of ODFW's acquisition of the Minam River Wildlife Area. We are grateful to ODFW and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation for their leadership.

As numerous others in the conservation community have expressed, this property is extremely valuable for many reasons, including as a narrow point in a connectivity corridor of continental importance. We see great potential for this acquisition to make vital contributions toward addressing the climate and biodiversity crises and protecting the region's beloved wildlife.

At the same time, we are concerned that the future management plan, especially provisions for maintaining "working lands" status, could sacrifice the integrity of habitats and ecosystems that could be kept intact or allowed to recover naturally for carbon sequestration and thriving ecosystems.

We urge the Commission to approve this acquisition, and look forward to opportunities to participate with ODFW and other stakeholders as the management plan for this area is developed.

Sincerely,

Debra Higbee-Sudyka *she/her/hers*
Chair, Conservation Committee
Oregon Chapter Sierra Club
Cell: 541-554-6979
ConservationCommittee@oregon.sierraclub.org
<http://oregon2.sierraclub.org/chapter>

BORISCH Roxann B * ODFW

Subject: FW: ODFW Minam River Acquisition support letter for Friday's Hearing
Attachments: EOLL_Minam_River_acquisition_letter_8_3_2021.pdf

From: David Mildrexler <davidm@eorlegacylands.org>
Sent: Wednesday, August 04, 2021 4:18 PM
To: curt.melcher@state.or.us; COMMISSION ODFW * ODFW <ODFW.COMMISSION@odfw.oregon.gov>
Cc: James Monteith <james@eorlegacylands.org>
Subject: ODFW Minam River Acquisition support letter for Friday's Hearing

Director Melcher and Commissioners,

We greatly appreciate the Department's proactive and cooperative approach in acquiring the exemplary Minam River Wildlife Area. Attached please find our letter of support.

Sincerely,
David Mildrexler, PhD
Systems Ecologist
Eastern Oregon Legacy Lands
Joseph, Oregon
(cell) 541-786-9354



Eastern Oregon Legacy Lands

3 August 2021

ODFW Commission
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, Oregon 97302

Dear Director Melcher and Commissioners,

Thank you for your work to secure the Lower Minam River through a two-phase acquisition of 15,573 acres of prime intact lands and waters. This is a critical step for the conservation of the region and builds on decades of work by ODFW and Eastern Oregonians to protect the unmatched Minam River Country.

As the largest watershed in the Wallowa Mountains, Minam River drains the heart of the Eagle Cap Wilderness, Oregon's largest Wilderness Area. As an undeveloped wild river from its source high in the alpine country of the Eagle Cap Wilderness, to its dramatic confluence with the Wallowa River, the Minam is unique in Oregon and represents a great achievement in the conservation of Oregon's lands and waters. The acquisition exemplifies the importance of cross-jurisdictional conservation to secure wildlife corridors, protect water, and secure species and carbon-rich forests during a period of rapid planetary change.

Wildlife Corridor

The Minam River is a critical wildlife corridor connecting the Eagle Cap Wilderness to the Lower Grande Ronde Basin. This corridor links Oregon's largest Wilderness Area to core habitat areas including the Grande Ronde Wild & Scenic River, the Wenaha-Tucannon Wilderness, the Grande Ronde, Tope Creek, Joseph Canyon, and Wildhorse Inventoried Roadless Areas on National Forest Lands, Bureau of Land Management Lands, as well as the Nez Perce Tribe's Precious Lands. This area provides critical habitat for carnivores, ungulates, raptors, and migratory fish. Protecting and restoring habitat and linkages is vital for wide-ranging species, and essential to the long-term functioning of this natural landscape of the Wallowa Country.

Despite its relatively large size, much of the Eagle Cap Wilderness and adjacent National Forest lands are surrounded by developed and heavily modified private agricultural lands. The Lower Minam provides the most critical linkage between the Eagle Cap Wilderness and the closest critical habitat areas to the North. TNC Regional Connectivity data confirms what managers have known for decades: that the Lower Minam is key to securing northward wildlife migration and dispersal from the Eagle Cap Wilderness into adjacent core habitats and providing corridors between these key conservation landscapes. The expected climate impacts in the coming decades increase the need for landscape and regional connectivity that allows species to shift their ranges in response to rising temperatures, and for gene flow between populations.

Prominent retired ODFW District Wildlife Biologist Vic Coggins has this to say:

"I don't know any other land acquisition that would be as important," he said, calling the area a "super important wildlife corridor for big game, upland birds and wildlife. This is the lowest elevation in the Minam unit. ... I can't say enough about the importance of this area."

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Water Security: Quality & Quantity

The Minam River is one of the most significant sources of water for the Lower Grande Ronde River System, providing cold, clear, and abundant flows. About a third of the Wallowa Mountain Range is drained by the Minam River, which contributes clean surface drinking water to downstream communities and supports critically important salmon and steelhead populations.

Protecting the waters of the Minam by maintaining the intact landscape values is the most cost-effective means to provide clean water, fish and wildlife habitat, and climate change mitigation, while also supporting sustainable recreation economies worth billions of dollars annually.

Carbon and Species-Rich Forests

Protecting carbon and species rich forests is one of the most critical proactive measures that we can take to combat climate change and the loss of biodiversity. Acquisition of intact private lands presents substantial opportunities for increasing carbon storage and protecting biodiversity. To contribute toward these targets, managers must protect carbon-rich and biodiverse forests from a focus on resource extraction.

Large trees play an inordinately significant role in storing and accumulating carbon from the atmosphere. Just 1% of these rare giants hold half of all the aboveground carbon stored in the world's forests. In Eastern Oregon, where forests are recovering from a century of large tree logging, 3% of the largest trees held 42% of the aboveground carbon. Old growth forests support unique biodiversity, store large quantities of carbon, and have been shown to provide temperature refugia to climate warming and buffer climate-sensitive species.

Recreation

Recreation can be compatible with protection as long as it's generally non-consumptive and not associated with off-highway and mechanized vehicles which have many well-documented deleterious effects on ecosystems, including habitat fragmentation and animal displacement.

The Minam River Wildlife Area Acquisition is an outstanding step for protection of crucial wildlife habitat, anadromous fish, and aquatic resources. There are few areas of greater significance to the conservation of Oregon's lands and waters. Understanding that this landscape is working proactively to protect us from the greatest challenges we face today, climate change, biodiversity loss, and aridification, while supporting sustainable economies is key to sustaining those values in the long-term.

We appreciate the Department's proactive and cooperative approach in acquiring these exemplary conservation lands. For questions or elaboration, please contact David Mildrexler, PhD, Systems Ecologist, Eastern Oregon Legacy Lands, davidm@eorlegacylands.org.

Most sincerely,



James Monteith
Chairman, Board of Trustees