

September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Jim Morgan, Stewardship Manager  
Oregon Parks and Recreation Department  
725 Summer Street NE, Ste C  
Salem, OR 97301-1271

Subject: Molalla River Scenic Waterway Assessment

Dear Mr. Morgan:

American Whitewater writes to express our support for designating the Molalla River as a State Scenic Waterway. Many of our members have chosen to call Oregon home because of the outstanding whitewater boating opportunities in the state, including those that the Molalla River provides.<sup>1</sup> Designating the Molalla as a State Scenic Waterway will not only enhance the quality of life for those who recreate on the river, but will also bring economic benefits to local communities.<sup>2</sup>

American Whitewater is a national non-profit 501(c)(3) river conservation organization founded in 1954. We have approximately 6,000 members and 100 local-based affiliate clubs, representing thousands of whitewater paddlers across the nation. American Whitewater's mission is to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely. As a conservation-oriented paddling organization, American Whitewater has an interest in the Molalla River. A significant percentage of American Whitewater members reside in Oregon—a short driving distance from this river for recreation.

The Molalla River meets the criteria for a State Scenic Waterway: it is free flowing, the river has exceptional scenic quality as viewed from the river, and the water is an exceptional setting for recreational use. These qualities led to the proposal to designate the river as a Wild and Scenic River. American Whitewater has actively supported designation of the Molalla River as a Wild Scenic River through federal legislation (H.R. 1230 - Molalla River Wild and Scenic Rivers Act , H.R. 1230 and S.353 - Oregon Treasures Act of 2013). We recommend that the State Scenic Waterway correspond with the legal description in current federal legislation as follows:

(i) Molalla river (including Copper Creek Fork)--The approximately 15.1-mile segment

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<sup>1</sup> Our inventory of whitewater resources for the Molalla River includes the following:

<http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/River/detail/id/2712/>

<http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/River/detail/id/1533/>

<http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/River/detail/id/3763/>

<sup>2</sup> The Outdoor Industry Association reports that outdoor recreation generates \$12.8 billion in direct spending and 141,000 direct jobs in Oregon State. [https://outdoorindustry.org/images/ore\\_reports/OR-oregon-outdoorrecreationeconomy-oia.pdf](https://outdoorindustry.org/images/ore_reports/OR-oregon-outdoorrecreationeconomy-oia.pdf)

from the southern boundary line of T. 7 S., R. 4 E., sec. 19, downstream to the edge of the Bureau of Land Management boundary in T. 6 S., R. 3 E., sec. 7.

(ii) Table Rock Fork Molalla River--The approximately 6.2-mile segment from the easternmost Bureau of Land Management boundary line in the NE\1/4\ sec. 4, T. 7 S., R. 4 E., downstream to the confluence with the Molalla River.

By making the boundaries for the state waterways congruent with the federal legislation, we can take advantage of the existing strong public support for protecting river values, which include outdoor recreation. Additionally, this will provide the opportunity to develop a coordinated river management plan.

We look forward to working with you to protect this river for future generations. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions regarding the opportunities for whitewater recreation on the Molalla River and the benefits that a State Scenic Waterway designation would bring in protecting this use.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. O'Keefe', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Thomas O'Keefe, PhD  
Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director