

September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2014

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

Subject: Grande Ronde River Scenic Waterway Assessment

Dear Mr. Morgan:

American Whitewater writes to express our support for designating the Grande Ronde 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 Grande Ronde River provides.<sup>1</sup> Designating the Grande Ronde 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 Grande Ronde River. A significant percentage of American Whitewater members reside in Oregon, Washington and Idaho—a short driving distance from this river for recreation.

The Grande Ronde 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 waterway provides an exceptional setting for recreational use. Designating the headwaters of the Grande Ronde will not only protect these values, but will also have a positive impact on the entire length of the river.

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 Grande Ronde River and the benefits that a State Scenic Waterway

---

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

<http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/River/detail/id/3079/>

<http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/River/detail/id/1512/>

<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)

designation would bring.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. O'Keefe', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Thomas O'Keefe, PhD  
Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director