

Order 23-11-28-13

Public Comment received by the end of the day November 27, 2023

Parties that submitted comment:

Karen Bentson

Walter Bernard

Daniel Blades

Sue Brown

Dennis Carey

Reta Cochrane

Alice Doyle

Jennifer Ferraez

Ellen Jaeger

Jessica Landstra

Karen Mitchell

Devin Pixton

Katherine Reinecke

Valerie Rocco

Buck Rudicel

Karl Walter

Wayne Williams

Rene Williams

Kris Woolhouse

John Wooten

From: Karen Bentson
To: [SERSLEV Rachel](#)
Subject: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 11:28:47 AM

[EXTERNAL]

Hello, I am a Dorena resident who is a volunteer firefighter and training to be an Emergency Medical Responder. Throughout my training, I am learning about how it takes collaboration between agencies to develop better emergency response and build resilience in communities. I believe that having the fire district will not only improve our safety from fire, but bolster the efforts of other agencies that provide services in our area. This includes Lane County Emergency Management, South Lane Fire and Rescue, LCSO search and rescue, Oregon State Fire Marshal, and Oregon Department of Forestry.

Our community has proven to be committed and coordinated to improving safety and resilience, and we are ready for this!

Karen Bentson
76164 Booth Kelly Camp Rd
Dorena, OR 97434

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [walt bernard](#)
Subject: RE: Walt's Public Comment 11-28--23 Row River Fire District Hearing #1 10am
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:30:05 AM
Attachments: [Walts Public Comment 11-28-23.docx](#)

Hello,

Thank you for submitting your public comments for the November 28th, 2023 Board of Commissioners Meeting.

Your comments have been forwarded to the Board of Commissioners and to the Planner for this item. Your comments are also included as a link on our 11/28/23 agenda. The material can be viewed by clicking the view material link below.

#PUBLIC COMMENTS ([view material](#))

Diana Jones

Board Supervisor | Board of County Commissioners
County Administration

Hours: M-Th, off on Friday

Ph: 541-682-3706

Diana.Jones@lanecountyor.gov

Web: www.lanecounty.org

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From: walt bernard
Sent: Friday, November 24, 2023 10:51 AM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: Walt's Public Comment 11-28--23 Row River Fire District Hearing #1 10am

[EXTERNAL 

Here are my written comments.
Please confirm receiving

--

Public Comment
on
The First Hearing and Consideration of:
The Formation of: Row River Rural Fire Protection District

My name is Walt Bernard, 75976 Booth Kelly Camp Rd. Dorena Oregon. I am a Chief Petitioner and Board member of Row River Fire Response. Our main projects include:

- Formation of a Special Rural Fire Protection District.
- Establishing a Volunteer Firefighter Auxiliary in partnership with SLFR as a transition to full district operations.
- Improved community fire resiliency by defensible space and preventative measures.
- Building a Fire and Disaster safe shelter and resiliency center in our valley.

Fire doesn't wait around while we form a district. So, our community formed a volunteer fire auxiliary in cooperation with South Lane Fire and Rescue, while working to create this new district.

Immediate fire response services were a prime objective of our organization, and it's working! **Our trained Volunteer Firefighters were first responders on two significant fires in our valley September 2023:** in the Cerro Gordo and Circling Hawk areas of this valley. As we all know, it only takes one of these fires to forever change the shape of a community like ours.

Res ipsa loquitur: The actions and facts speak for themselves. **Facts**—that these two fires were on their way to becoming '*that next conflagration*' in Lane County, and **Actions**- timely and well-organized fire response halting this disaster. There is no doubt in my mind that the partnership between Row River Fire Response volunteers and South Lane Fire enabled a rapid multiagency response that prevented significant loss of life and property.

The proposed **Petition** before Commissioners today is to establish permanent fire and emergency medical services for our community that perpetuate these examples of success. In accordance with ORS 478 and 198, the petition meets all the requirements for consideration by Commissioners including documentation of the need for services, district boundaries, economic feasibility, concurrent services in the proposed district, as well as the supporting petition signatures.

Here in Harris Hall are a portion of the many supporters of the district formation—volunteers, board members, signature gatherers, community members, children--please stand and be recognized.

Res ipsa loquitor: The actions of this community speak for itself. This community has created and sheperding this District to fruition. Today we ask Commissioners to enable the next steps of bringing this worthy cause to the voters for approval. This May, I am confident that voters will approve the formation of the Row River Rural Fire Protection District improving safety and quality of life for our community and beyond.

For the Record and Regarding the:
Row River Rural Fire Protection District:
Economic Feasibility Study

Regarding ‘Description of Services Provided,’ our organization recently became aware that National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards and Certifications does not distinguish between different techniques of structural fire suppression, such as interior, exterior, non-entry, or ‘frontier’ techniques. As such, our organization has determined that in addition to the described service of ‘*Structural Fire Response: non-entry class*’, that our **ongoing** firefighter training to DPSST and NFTA Firefighter I and II Standards and Certification *will permit and certify* firefighters for structural entry, transitional, and other forms of fire response. In other words, certification to NFPA firefighter I and II standards **include all these techniques**—there is no distinction between entry or non-entry firefighting.

Since firefighting is a continuum of response and there is no difference in firefighter training, certification, costs, or equipment; we have determined that addition of these services has no economic impact on feasibility projections, budget, or operational services for the proposed district. We are proud to offer

this extended and higher level of service, including greater potential for victim rescue, to our community, certain that increase service abilities translate to the potential for greater life safety and property protection. In fact, most of our community have been requesting these services--we are responding to their feedback.

Submitted for Public Record
Row River Rural Fire Protection District Hearing
November 28, 2023

Walter Bernard, MD
Chief Petitioner
President, Row River Fire Response
PO Box 4
75976 Booth Kelly Camp Rd
Dorena Or 97434
541-510-2359

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [Daniel Blades](#)
Subject: RE: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 11:47:03 AM

Hello,

Thank you for submitting your public comments for the November 28th, 2023 Board of Commissioners Meeting.

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From: Daniel Blades

Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 11:35 AM

To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>

Subject: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23

[EXTERNAL 

To Lane County Commissioners,

I'm solidly behind efforts to create a Fire District for the Upper Row River. I believe the necessity of the Fire District is, to put it bluntly, obvious for the safety of myself and family, friends and neighbors.

But I think there is a less obvious benefit of the Fire District's creation — a growing sense of community. For some folks it's a remembrance of past times when mills and forestry supported families, schools and businesses. For others its uncovering a fact that's been hidden, the fact that we are all part of a community.

I've been both surprised and heartened by the response to the proposed creation of the District. Folks from up and

down the valley have come together to make the District a reality. In doing so I've worked with people I've known for decades and with people I met for the first time. And it has been work, but it's also been a pleasure and a joy.

And that's who a community is, people working together, people sharing difficulties and pleasures. And we've learned that a community stretches from the past into the future. Our community is not static but ever changing and evolving.

I know that not all my neighbors are in favor of the Fire District. And while I disagree with this position, I respect their opinions and I do understand why many of them believe this. But all of my neighbors deserve the services that the District will provide. They deserve it because we are a community and that's what a community does.

I strongly urge the Commissioners to allow the petition to for the Row River Fire District to proceed and come to a vote this spring.

Daniel Blades
38385 Lower Brice Creek Rd
Dorena 97434

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [Sue Brown](#)
Subject: RE: ° Public Comment Row River Fire District Hearing 11/28/23
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:24:31 AM

Hello,

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From: Sue Brown
Sent: Sunday, November 26, 2023 7:25 PM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: ° Public Comment Row River Fire District Hearing 11/28/23

[EXTERNAL 

°

Good Morning! My name is Sue Brown and I have the privilege of living at 39909 Bricecreek Road in Disston. I have lived there for 26 years. I am here to ask each one of you for your help in approving the formation of the Row River Fire Protection District. This action will save lives and property, as well as improve the resiliency of our community. It will also support Lane county's 3 year strategic plan of a safe county, with a vibrant active group of citizens who organized to accomplish a common goal. To establish an infrastructure of rural fire safety that currently does not exist. Our Row River community wants to be forward thinking and prevent a fire catastrophe.

Close your eyes - imagine it's the middle of the night, your dogs wake you up barking frantically and pawing at the window. The white blinds are glowing orange from the outside. You pull the blinds - and you see your neighbor's house - that's 100 feet away- engulfed in flames! Shooting skyward, crackling and popping as the fire intensifies and consumes the bone dry 1950's home.

You immediately think call 911 - you give the address and tell them my neighbor's house is on fire! Please send Help! The operator questions you-are people in the house. You assume so - it's the middle of the night. But, you're told that there is no fire protection and they will send out a sheriff.

Oh my God! You run outside to see 4 or 5 neighbors pulling their garden hoses as far as possible to try and slow the fire. The streams of water look more like a squirt gun trying to put out a bon fire. The intense heat feels like you are walking closer and closer into an oven.

It's not working... you call a second time. Is anyone coming? The sheriff is on their way. 30 minutes pass - the house is smoldering- not much left to save. Here comes the sheriff car with a standard size fire extinguisher.

Too late..

This is a true story that I experienced. Thank God our neighbors escaped before they were burned alive or succumbed to smoke inhalation!

Our rural community, my neighbors need your help. I need your help.

It is essential that we move forward and establish our Row River Fire District.

It's an exciting and empowering time for our community!

I know if we all work together - we can make this happen!

Thank you

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From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [DENNIS CAREY](#)
Subject: RE: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 10:49:01 AM

Thank you for submitting your public comments for the November 28th, 2023 Board of Commissioners Meeting.

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From: DENNIS CAREY
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 10:38 AM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23

[EXTERNAL 

Hello, my name is Dennis Carey.

On September 7th, 2020, at about 10:30 that night, I walked outside our home in Blue River and saw the bright glow of the Holiday Farm Fire lighting up the sky through the trees behind our home. We had no power, no radio, no internet -- so we were not getting updates or even evacuation notices.

My wife, children and I, loaded our two vehicles up with some of our personal belongings, and left with the clothes on our backs.

If it weren't for the help of the McKenzie Volunteer Fire Department, some of my neighbors would NOT have made it out.

After the devastating Holiday Farm Fire, my family and I moved to the Row River Valley in Dorena Oregon.

I am here in support of forming the Row River fire district.

Having lived through a wildfire I have seen first hand how important it is to have a fire district in our own local community. Our neighbors, our kids, our elderly and our school needs this protection. The impact of what this will do for the community of Row River Valley is huge. Aside from saving homes and property and stopping the spread of a fire from burning down our community, it will give us a rally point in the event we are not able to evacuate due to an extreme fire.

I fully believe that the quickness of the McKenzie Fire District and their evacuation process of sending people to a rally point is what saved lives in the Holiday Farm Fire. Thank you.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [Reta Cochrane](#)
Subject: RE: Comments for the 11/28/23 Board of Commissioners Hearing on Row River Fire District
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:27:05 AM

Hello,

Thank you for submitting your public comments for the November 28th, 2023 Board of Commissioners Meeting.

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From: Reta Cochrane
Sent: Friday, November 24, 2023 2:30 PM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: Comments for the 11/28/23 Board of Commissioners Hearing on Row River Fire District

[EXTERNAL 

My name is Reta Cochrane. I've lived at 37029 Row River Road, Cottage Grove for over 40 years. I retired from teaching at Dorena School after 30 years. I love my home and my neighborhood school. I continue to volunteer to teach there.

Living here for so long, I recognize how vulnerable homes and schools are to fire. I once had to put out a fire in the bathroom of our school gym with a fire extinguisher while waiting for organized trained firefighters to arrive.

A few years later I had to fight fire on my doorstep when it leveled everything on 4 neighboring home sites before it finally was stopped with a change in wind direction and water drops from a helicopter.

South Lane Fire and Rescue does the best they can to help us, and we are thankful. Many of us pay an annual fee for them to come protect our homes, but they have other obligations in their own district. Depending on the response load they have already, it can take 30 or more minutes to get to a fire our valley.

This Summer I saw what Fire Districts with Mutual Aid agreements can accomplish. It's impressive. I want that sense of security in the future. If we have our own Fire District, we will have a promise of help from all the surrounding districts. We will not be alone to protect our

valuable valley, but we'll also have the ability to stop fires ourselves because we will have a trained, equipped, and funded volunteer Rural Fire District.

And even more importantly, trained Row River Fire District first responders with first aid skills and AED's will save lives in our valley. The wait for an ambulance is at least 20 minutes and local first responders could apply first aid that saves lives, stabilizes patients and prepares them for transport. As a chief petitioner, I understand the importance of making sure Row River Fire District happens!

From: Alice
To: [SERSLEV Rachel](#)
Subject: Hi there, Rachel!
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 12:24:09 PM
Attachments: [BOC. Row River Rural Fire District.pdf](#)

[EXTERNAL]

Please put this letter in the record for this item tomorrow: Row River Rural Fire Protection District.

Thank you very much!

Alice Doyle

Log House Plants

78185 Rat Creek Rd

Cottage Grove, OR 97424

<http://www.loghouseplants.com>

541-942-2288

541-914-6545 (cell)

November 27, 2023

RE: Row River Rural Fire Protection District

Hello there, Lane County Commissioners,

In our senior year at University of Oregon, 1974, we found the farm of our dreams on Rat Creek.

Everything was perfect: facing south, beautiful back forty, Dorena Lake 800 feet away and wonderful neighbors. Everything, we discovered, except for the fact we weren't in a Fire District. What to do?

We've been keeping our fingers crossed.

Through the 50 years here on Rat Creek, we've been called in the middle of the night to come help our neighbors fight the fire in a historic house up the road, collected petition signatures to put a Fire District on the ballot (couldn't get enough), called by a neighbor in tears asking us to help contact the surrounding impacted timber owners who might be able to bring equipment to fight the house fire close to us (each company we called said their fire fighting equipment fluids had been drained and equipment put away for the winter), called a neighborhood meeting during the pandemic outside at Harms Park at the end of Rat Creek on Dorena Lake (excellent turnout, discussed how to be best prepare, handed out a map of all the properties in the area with contacts and cell phones for phone tree emergency alerts) and more.

We have all been terrified by the horrific fires up river in Bohemia Mining District and Brice Creek late this summer and a fire just 2 miles away on the Row River Trail. And In early September the Rat Creek neighborhood was evacuated due to a fire on Cerro Gordo.

At this point the concerns are constant and pretty much nerve wracking. The forests are showing impacts from drought. The heavy snowload of the storm February 25th, 2019 knocked over trees in our forests. We're worried about the fire danger of those dead trees and the habitat that has been increased for wood borers, carpenter ants and termites who target stressed living trees.

Commissioners, thank you so much for your ongoing and consistent support for the Row River Rural Fire Protection District. We all really appreciate it.



Alice Doyle

78185 Rat Creek

Cottage Grove, Oregon 97242

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [Jennifer Ferraez](#)
Cc: [walt bernard](#)
Subject: RE: PUBLIC COMMENT FOR MEETING DATE 11-28-23
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 9:45:57 AM

Hello,

Thank you for submitting your public comments for the November 28th, 2023 Board of Commissioners Meeting.

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From: Jennifer Ferraez
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 9:42 AM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT FOR MEETING DATE 11-28-23

[EXTERNAL 

Good Morning Diana,

Please see my attached letter to the Commissioners. I am unable to attend in person tomorrow with the Row River Fire group.

Thank you!

Jennifer Ferraez, LCSW

November 27, 2023

Dear Sir and Madam Commissioners,

The ancestors of the present day people of the Row River Valley begin settling in this place with the start of the timber industry in the area many years ago. Mills were built along the river, spanning miles. Along with the timber mills, homes were built to support the families who worked there. Schools were built. Community grew. The mills developed their own firefighting system to protect the community from harm. The people of the Row River Valley always knew they would be protected from the threat of fire.

The Row River Valley is now identified as being at "high and extreme risk" for fire as well as being in the Wildland-urban interface. South Lane Fire district does a great job in responding when they can, but their fire station is too far away to respond in a timely manner. A fire in the forest here would likely burn the entire community, like we saw in the Holiday Farm Fire in September of 2020. Community members have been working to provide effective, local fire protection in our area, but the process is complicated and is too expensive without outside funding.

I came to believe long ago that a citizen of a community is not entitled to complain unless they are willing to do something to create change. A little over one year ago I was delighted to join a small group of people who were interested in creating a comprehensive, sustainable response to supporting our community in protecting our properties from fire. Our initial group included two retired businessmen, two current business owners, a retired school teacher, and myself, a clinical social worker. In this short time, our initial group has grown to dozens of committed volunteers!

It has been nearly two decades now since the last mill closed down and yet, until now, no other system for fire protection had been developed! The citizens of the Row River Valley have now come together, united by a shared vision to protect our people and the land that we love from the threat of fire. We are asking your support in backing the sustainable system that we have created by countless volunteer hours of people who believe in this work and are committed to seeing it through.

Thank you for all you have done to support us this far.

Jennifer Ferraez, LCSW

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [Ellen Jaeger](#)
Subject: RE: Row River Fire District
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:30:41 AM

Hello,

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-----Original Message-----

From: Ellen Jaeger
Sent: Friday, November 24, 2023 10:48 AM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: Row River Fire District

[EXTERNAL 

We are Ellen and Herbert Jaeger and Ruth Veltin of 35653 Shoreview Dr., Dorena OR. We include ourselves in the group of people that are vehemently for the Row River fire district. A district located in our valley will increase our fire protection as the wildfires become more frequent. It is in our opinion, an absolute necessity.
We would like the voters of this valley have an opportunity vote on the establishment of this district.
Thank you for supporting this choice to make a choice.

Ellen Jaeger, Herbert Jaeger and Ruth Veltin

Sent from my iPhone

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [Jessica Landstra](#)
Subject: RE: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 11:00:21 AM
Attachments: [RRFR Support Testimony \(002\).pdf](#)

Hello,

Thank you for submitting your public comments for the November 28th, 2023 Board of Commissioners Meeting.

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From: Jessica Landstra
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 10:56 AM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23

[EXTERNAL 

Please see the attached public comment.

Thank you,
Jessica Landstra

RRFR Support Testimony

Good morning, Commissioners,

My name is Jessica Landstra, I am originally a resident of Creswell where my dad served as a volunteer firefighter for over 35 years. Today I am here to speak in favor of forming the Row River RFPD. I have been thinking about which qualities I should talk about today when it comes to the importance of a volunteer fire department. I would like to hit 3 points Community, Time, and Location.

Community. A fire department plays a part in its community by helping its members join defensible space programs, clearly marking driveways for ease of identifying an address, and community outreach. Community outreach played a large part in my life when firefighters would come to my school in full turnouts and breathing apparatus teaching what they look and sound like, so we weren't afraid of them.

Time. When an emergency happens, time is important. If a cardiac arrest call comes in the nearest ambulance is in Cottage Grove, that is the best-case scenario, and they will still be about 20 minutes out. If only one ambulance is staffed in Cottage Grove and it is out on a call or transporting a patient, now the closest ambulance is in Creswell, and we are looking at a 30-minute response time. Having the ability to be there within 10 minutes can change outcomes.

Location. Locating an incident can be difficult in a rural area. Not all addresses are clearly marked and there is a lot of forested land. Finding access points to fight a fire when all you are told is where the caller is and that they can see smoke in another area can make it very difficult to locate the fire and gain access to it. Having people close by who are familiar with the area to respond will help by getting the right information to our mutual aid partners. We will be able to locate the call and relay what we are looking at and what resources may be needed. This will help with not calling resources that are not needed or calling the resources needed faster.

I hope that you will approve Row River RFPD. Thank you for your time.

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [Karen Mitchell](#)
Subject: RE: PUBLIC COMMENT FOR MEETING DATE 11/28/2023
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 11:20:15 AM

Hello,

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-----Original Message-----

From: Karen Mitchell
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 11:16 AM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT FOR MEETING DATE 11/28/2023

[EXTERNAL 

I would like to show my support and appreciation for the efforts made by Row River Fire Response board members and volunteers. I truly believe a Fire District is needed and is well overdue.

While I realize there are many factors involved in fighting a fire, despite how it started, I feel that if we continue to do nothing for our communities protection we are just setting ourselves up for a

future disaster.

A little about me and why I feel this way...

While growing up my family had a cabin in the Sierra Nevada's for approximately 5 of my first decades here on earth. I'm sure the lightening struck trees are still there. We always had a fear of this cherished family gathering place would someday be destroyed as we stayed tuned in to the news of the many fires that occurred. Hope not.

About 12 years ago in Northern CA my daughter-in-laws mother sadly died in a house fire. My son and DIL also reside here in Dorena for many years.

Fast forward to 2018... Feather River Canyon "Camp Fire" that destroyed not just Paradise, CA but the path to get there. I lived in the canyon when the fire took off from sparking power lines. My saving Grace was the fact that I lived upriver several miles and watched as the 50 mph wind gusts moved this fire quickly down river and over the ridges towards Paradise. In the path were several other smaller communities that lost their homes, businesses or lives in Yankee Hill and Concow. Some were my friends and today they still are trying to rebuild their lives emotionally and financially. At least those that survived.

I am today still thankful I was safe and the fire only burnt spot fires near me. I have lived here in Dorena since a month after the Camp Rd Fire. I love this community. I've found my home here and home to stay.

While I understand there are many variables to why a fire started and how to stop it. My hopes are that we are prepared to offer some type of support to fight such a fire, controlling the spread to save other properties and also provide medical support. Medical EMR also is a very needed service that I've not touched here but I think many will agree.

Thank you for taking the time to hear me out and share my thoughts.

Karen Mitchell

Wicks Rd

Dorena, OR 97434

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Lane County Agenda Review](#)
To: [Devin Pixton](#); [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
Cc: [walt bernard](#)
Subject: RE: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 9:30:27 AM
Attachments: [Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23.docx](#)

Attachment included:

Hello,

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#PUBLIC COMMENTS ([view material](#))

Diana Jones
Board Supervisor | Board of County Commissioners
County Administration
Hours: M-Th, off on Friday
Ph: 541-682-3706
Diana.Jones@lanecountyor.gov
Web: www.lanecounty.org
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-----Original Message-----

From: Devin Pixton
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 9:22 AM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Cc: walt bernard <workhorsewalt@gmail.com>
Subject: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23

[EXTERNAL 

Hello,

I am attaching my statement to be read at the Row River Fire District Hearing on 11-28-23. Please

let me know if you need anything further.

Thank you!

--

Devin Pixton (She/Her)

Dorena School Principal

devin.pixton@slane.k12.or.us

541-946-1506

November 23, 2023

To: Lane County Commissioners
Harris Hall
125 E 8th Eugene, OR

From: Devin Pixton
40259 Brice Creek Rd
Dorena, OR 97434

Re: Row River Fire District

Dear Lane County Commissioners:

I wish that I was able to attend this session in person, but as the principal of Dorena School I am in our building helping kids learn and grow. I am very excited to express my SUPPORT for the Row River Fire District. I moved into this community 5 years ago and while we absolutely love living up here in the mountains, every summer we pack our camper ready to evacuate. Going through your home with your children trying to decide what is irreplaceable and what is not feels heartbreaking. When we bought our home, we were told, when we purchased our homeowner's insurance that we were in the highest fire threat area due to being so far away from a fire department. We were told that if our house caught on fire, it would burn down and there would be nothing anyone could do about it. I will tell you, that feels hopeless. It feels terrifying. It feels helpless. That is until now, by creating a Fire district that can serve the community and residents of Dorena, Culp Creek, and Disston areas, it would not only be a necessary need but also bring so much security and safety to families that need it the most.

I've witnessed firsthand the positivity that the Row River Fire District has already contributed to our community, not only with protection from 3 fires that I know of, one that threatened our Dorena School, but with information sessions and fire safety to our students and families. During wildfire season this summer, it was because of the relationships formed with the South Lane Fire Department, that those of us furthest out, would be notified personally if we were needing to evacuate or not. Knowing that they would partner with the South Lane Department and go door to door so that we all knew, we wouldn't have to rely on an out-of-date app or our neighbor, gave us such a sense of ease. The district has brought a sense of pride to our small community.

As the principal of our beloved Dorena School I know that if a wildfire did take hold of our community without the help of the Row River Fire District that most of our families would never be able to recover what was lost. I also know that when medical emergencies have occurred at or near our school it has taken services 45 minutes to arrive! Knowing we have trained professionals that are willing and able to respond in a much timelier manner gives us all a sense of control and empowerment knowing we can be safe.

Thank you, Devin Pixton
Brice Creek Resident, Dorena School Principal

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [Katherine Reinecke](#)
Subject: RE: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 9:19:45 AM

Hello,

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From: Katherine Reinecke
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:57 AM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23

[EXTERNAL 

Here are my comments for the hearing...

Currently the Row River area has around 900 registered voters and their families who lack a vital community service...a fire district. It is something that most citizens of Lane County take for granted. We clearly lack the “safe and healthy county with robust infrastructure” which you as commissioners say you support.

There is a housing shortage in Lane County. Lack of a fire district may prevent people from choosing to live here. A repeat of a fire such as the Holiday farm fire could wipe out all of our homes at another huge cost to Lane County. Situations like this further aggravate the housing shortage.

So many of the lofty statements in the Lane County mission statement and strategic plan come to play in our request for this vote. We are individuals

who have come together with passion, countless hours of hard work, and the sole focus on protecting our precious corner of Lane County. We need your help to put this on the ballot so that we can help our neighbors and ourselves maintain rural equity.

Please support our efforts!

Katherine M Reinecke

37147 Row River Rd

Dorena, OR 97434

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [Valerie Rocco](#)
Subject: RE: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:24:05 AM

Hello,

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-----Original Message-----

From: Valerie Rocco
Sent: Sunday, November 26, 2023 9:08 PM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23

[EXTERNAL 

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support of the Row River fire district. I am a homeowner in Disston and I've lived here for 18 years with my family. We run a small farm here and have livestock. Our daughter was born here.

We consider ourselves community people and are proud to be from the Row River watershed. We work on and maintain relationships with our neighbors and are aware that some of our neighbors are elderly and don't have the same mobility that we do in times of crisis. Other neighbors have

concerns about their ability to protect their families, pets, livestock, and homes if there were fires in the area.

This past summer, we had a wildland fire, the Dinner Fire just 3 miles from our house, and that along with many other factors that are becoming more prevalent (like the ongoing drought, the drying up of once year around creeks, the dying off of native species of trees) has elevated our fire awareness.

We always knew that we are in the class 10 fire protection category, which means that no jurisdiction would respond if there was a house fire here. However, now it feels like a very different situation with all of the other factors than we previously navigated . Now a housefire could easily turn into a wildland fire and end anger other homes. Now a wildland fire could easily burn up all of the homes in our neighborhood.

As a result of my concern of this issue and my commitment to my community, I spent the last six months training to be a volunteer firefighter for the Row River fire response. It is no small commitment that continues today.

We need a fire district in the Row River Valley. All of the people who live here and identify with this place need supported in this way. I strongly urge you to support the continued development of the Row River fire district.

Thank you,

Valerie Rocco
40186 Brice Creek Rd., Dorena
541-632-2369. Cell
Sent from my iPhone

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [Buck](#)
Cc: [Walt](#)
Subject: RE: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 9:26:35 AM

Hello,

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From: Buck
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 9:25 AM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Cc: Walt <workhorsewalt@gmail.com>
Subject: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23

[EXTERNAL 

Hello. Thank you for allowing me to speak today on the forming of our volunteer fire district in the Row River Valley. My name is Buck Rudicel, have lived and raised my family in our community for over twenty years, and I am one of the trained and certified volunteer firefighters for our district. I support what we are accomplishing and the services we are going to provide for our district and neighbors. I have seen first hand the devastation that occurs when families lose everything that have, the memories that can't be replaced, the heart felt loss. My daughter Zayna and her family lost their home in the Holiday Fire and she gives full credit to the volunteer fire department for the lives

saved and their bravery. I did not sign up to volunteer to be a hero; I did it because I hate feeling helpless and I truly feel our community has been spared a tragic event that is getting closer to occurring every year. If or when something happens I want to be able to help, I want my neighbors to know they're being taken care of, and I don't want others to experience the loss and trauma members of my family have experienced. I thank my fellow volunteers, I thank South Land Fire and Rescue for everything they have done for us to train, outfit, mentor, and their continued support, and I thank my family for their patience while I strive to make them proud. Thank you for your time today.

In Earnest,
Buck Rudicel

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: karl@waltech.com
Subject: RE: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:27:53 AM

Hello,

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-----Original Message-----

From: karl@waltech.com
Sent: Friday, November 24, 2023 11:10 AM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23

[EXTERNAL 

Hello,

My name is Karl Walter and I support of the formation of the Row River Rural Fire Protection District.

I have lived in the area for a total of more than 40 years. I have two properties that will be covered by the District. My business also operates here in the District.

I feel that fire protection in the form of an official fire department has become absolutely necessary. Fire season has become more and more stressful, and the fires keep getting bigger and closer each

year. This year we even experienced a wildfire close enough to trigger evacuation level 2.

The organizers and volunteers have already given enormous amounts of their time and money to get this fire district formed. They have put together a plan that will provide us with fire protection that is far better than anything that has ever been available to us in the past. I thank them and give them my full support for this district formation.

Sincerely,

Karl Walter
35985 Row River Rd.
Cottage Grove, OR 97424
541 942-7563
karl@waltech.com

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [wayne williams](#)
Subject: RE: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:25:42 AM

Hello,

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From: wayne williams
Sent: Sunday, November 26, 2023 4:53 PM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: Public Comment: Row River Fire District Hearing 11-28-23

[EXTERNAL 

I would like to give my support for the formation of the Row River Fire District. This is badly needed for the safty of our community.

Wayne Williams

37727 Row river rd Dorena Oregon.

541 603-6530

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [smurfette1984rio](#)
Subject: RE: Row River Valley fire
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:26:33 AM

Hello,

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From: smurfette1984rio
Sent: Sunday, November 26, 2023 4:48 PM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: Row River Valley fire

[EXTERNAL 

Dear County Commissioners,

I am in full support of the community of Dorena, forming our own volunteer fire department. We are grateful for being able to learn from the south lane fire department. Having our own trained volunteers is a great line of defense for us who live in the Dorena area. Thank you for your support of our formation of the Row River Valley Fire Response.

Rene Williams, Dorena resident

Sent from my T-Mobile 5G Device

From: Kris Woolhouse
To: [SERSLEV Rachel](#)
Cc: [Kris Woolhouse](#)
Subject: Row River Fire District hearing 11-28-23
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 12:27:08 PM
Attachments: [RRFD hearing 11-28-23 2.pdf](#)

[EXTERNAL]

Hello Rachel, I would like to submit my public comment in support of the Row River Fire District formation.
Thank you, Kris Woolhouse

From: Kris Woolhouse/75976 Booth Kelly Camp Road, Dorena Oregon 97434

Re: Row River fire District Hearing 11-28-23/Public Comment

Dear Lane County Commissioners,

My Name is Kris Woolhouse. I live at 75976 Booth Kelly Camp Road in Dorena Oregon. For the past 22 years I have run a small vegetable farm business in Dorena. When we first moved to southern Lane County, the weather was predictable-- winters were wet, and the summers were near perfect with 3 months of warm, clear sky days. About 5 years ago the fire trends started to become noticeable. Smoke filled days turned into weeks during the late summer and fall. This made working outside miserable and harmful to health. This year and the past few years, several of my farmer's markets in Lane County were cancelled due to unhealthy air quality. We have seen at least 3 residences burn in our community in the last 3 years. This summer of 2023 was especially dramatic with wildfires - the Dorena reservoir Circling Hawk fire and the Cerro Gordo fire. I feel the fire/weather extremes will continue to trend upward. For the health and safety of our community and surrounding communities I support the formation of the Row River Fire District.

Thank you, Kris Woolhouse

From: [JONES Diana L \(CAO\)](#)
To: [John Wooten](#)
Subject: RE: Public Comment for Meeting 11-28-23
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:23:30 AM

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From: John Wooten
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:04 AM
To: JONES Diana L (CAO) <Diana.JONES@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: Public Comment for Meeting 11-28-23

[EXTERNAL 

Lane County Commissioners,

I am submitting this public comment on behalf of South Lane County Fire & Rescue in support of the potential ballot measure for the Row River Fire Protection District. Unprotected areas represent a major potential for rapid fire growth and spread due to a lack of localized resources to combat fires and respond to other emergencies such as cardiac arrest. The data and science support rapid initial attack as the way to stop a fire before it gets out of control. Having a fire district in the Row River drainage provides just such a resource and is long overdue. We support the formation of a fire district in the Row River drainage and would ask you to help make the ballot measure a reality. Thank you.

Sincerely,

John Wooten

Fire Chief

South Lane County Fire & Rescue

Office: 541-942-4493

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