



**REPRESENTATIVE GENE WHISNANT
OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE DISTRICT 53**

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Rep. Whisnant introduces jobs and South County environmental bill

Rep Gene Whisnant (R-Sunriver) introduced HB 3347 (amended) to allow development of up to 925 homes to expand Caldera Springs resort and requires the developer to contribute up to \$3 million for evaluation, monitoring and mitigating potential groundwater issues in South Deschutes County.

“I hope this bill creates new jobs and construction related jobs for families in Central Oregon severely affected by the recession,” Rep. Whisnant added. “The bill also provides funding for Oregon’s Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to continue to evaluate, monitor, and mitigate nitrate related groundwater issues in South County.”

HB 3347 waives Oregon’s current restriction that all Goal 8 destination resorts must have a deed restriction on all overnight accommodations. This condition states the property must be available for rent, 45 weeks a year and it must be rented through the resort’s central reservation service. The lending industry has recently determined that this provision changes the status of the property from a residence to a commercial property. Unfortunately, this reduces the value and marketability since a commercial loan requires a larger down payment and a higher interest rate.

DEQ could use the \$3 million in coordination with the newly formed DEQ Steering Committee on South Deschutes and Northern Klamath County Groundwater Projection Project to fund additional studies on the high nitrate levels, evaluate the possibility of additional sewer systems, create a financial assistance fund for citizens, and seek Goal 11 exceptions for sewer systems outside urban growth areas.

Rep. Whisnant reported: “I originally drafted the bill to create a South County Sanitary Authority to receive the \$3 million directly from the developer. After some citizen comments and conversations with community leaders, the DLCD Director and DEQ director; I decided to send the funds to DEQ, who with inputs from the steering committee, could use the funds to create a Sanitary Authority at a later date.”

The new “Pine Forest” development will still be required to have 50% open space and provide for a minimum of 25% overnight accommodations. Currently, over 85% of all Sunriver properties are used as overnight accommodations or vacation homes. It will also be required to file a master plan with Deschutes County and will still be subject to a local public hearing process and appeals. The bill also requires that the development pay for and provide traffic mitigation measures deemed necessary by the county and ODOT.

“As soon as we receive the amended bill, we will solicit public input as the bill begins the “Legislative process,” Rep. Whisnant stated.

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