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Curry Recovery & Recover Oregon

Purpose: Qualifying Curry County for Federal Disaster Declaration Relief – We’re consistently told that we do not qualify – that notion – ruling should be challenged.

To coordinate Curry Citizens, other Oregon Counties, and all levels of Government in a unified effort to see that Curry County receives and relief perhaps even similar to that coming to Puerto Rico, Texas and Florida Disasters, not to mention the heart-wrenching California Fires -- the 200 billion appropriated by the President and U.S. Congress in ‘17’ and similar now for ‘18’.

The Curry County story must be told—in addition to the continuing impacts from the 2017 Chetco Bar Fire, and as of this writing – the 2018 Klondike Fire destroyed 175,000 Acres and had residents in Level 3 Evacuation status for almost two weeks.

We are asking State and Federal Public Officials, and other interested parties to assess the issues negatively affecting our County and economic health. Unfortunately Curry County continues to be at the top of the list, and is considered the most economically distressed out of all thirty-six Oregon counties.

Issues negatively impacting Curry County:

- **Suicide Rates** -- Curry County has one of the highest rates of suicide among our Vets of all 36 Oregon Counties.
- **Curry County Unemployment** – As of this most recent writing and of the 36 Oregon Counties, Curry has the highest Unemployment rate at 5.6%. (Oregon and the U.S. are both at 3.7%).
- **South Curry County Emergency Medical Facility** -- The South End of our County closest Emergency Medical access is both 25 miles South (Sutter Coast Hospital) and 27 miles North (Curry General Hospital). That is difficult for the 14,000 people in that area that are required to travel that long distance.
- **Growing Homeless Population** – Many intense issues with transients moving in – sadly some incidents of violence.

- Future log supply shortages -- local plywood and lumber mills in South County. Keeping the two South County Mills stocked and the 480 people employed there is critical to the Curry Economy!
- Sudden Oak Death (S.O.D.) -- trying to keep this terrible pathogen isolated to Curry County before it spreads throughout the state. If unsuccessful – it would have a huge negative impact on all of Oregon and the possibly even the West! Many Curry industries impacted and at risk; IT MUST BE KEPT AND ISOLATED HERE!
- Curry Emergency Communication Network -- (5 Towers) outdated and failing – estimated somewhere between 2-6 million dollars for critical repairs and long term replacement.
- Invasive Species -- Gorse, Himalaya Blackberries, Pampas Grass, Scotch Broom, English Ivy, and many other non-native prolific plants greatly affecting our landscape, growth and Agricultural efforts.
- County Road Infrastructure damage -- due to the Chetco Bar Fire and other natural and extreme weather effects over recent years -- some to be potentially recovered through F.E.M.A.
- Sport and Commercial Ocean Fishing -- Years of severe restrictions in our ocean fisheries have been very difficult for our Fishing Industry and all (3) of our Curry Port Facilities.
- Oregon Coast Highway 101 -- Our beautiful scenic route is critical to the Oregon Coastal communities and beyond, attracting visitors to our state. The constant movement of this road surface through Curry County often leaves it in poor condition. Additionally, views critical to the scenic appeal are blocked by overgrown Spruce and other evergreen species. Highway 101 is also critical to Curry County, since major failures or disasters could leave us cut off from vital ingress/egress.
- Tourism, Short and Long Term Damage -- due to mega fires and summer smoke. Fears surrounding smoke, evacuation and fire have a drastic and immediate impact on tourism industries. Rumor or incorrect information can have catastrophic results. Many local businesses' suffered and also community events cancelled.
- Forest Fire Smoke - Associated health risks -- two years in a row have some citizens ready to move.
- Rising crime -- resulting from limited law enforcement funding and poor economic conditions. Higher crime results drop in property values.
- Severely reduced O&C and FS timber receipts to Curry County and related impact on County services – Public Safety, Schools, and Roads
- Chetco Bar Fire Destruction, 2017 – Timber Value lost – (Rough estimates) -- 150 marketable trees per acre X \$ 150 per tree value X 191,000 acres = 42 mm. Add the loss of wildlife habitat, damage to 80% of the Brookings-Harbor Watershed and many related and residual issues. I've been unable to get any help for the 8 families who lost their homes due to this fire – TRAGIC!
- 2015 Sink hole and the 2011Tsunami – Related impacts -- Port of Brookings-Harbor -- Ongoing setbacks, debts – many difficulties.
- Opioid Crisis – Curry County has the dubious distinction as well in being one of the top Oregon Counties, level of addiction. We must deal with this and related Mental Health Issues.

- Public Land Surveyor Restoration -- Chetco Bar Fire – Burned Survey Monuments and Accessories, destroyed by the fire. Very difficult and expensive work for recovery—severely damaged land and terrain.
- Reduced Salmon Hatchery Counts -- Lost Creek Mitigation Shortfalls ... Construction back in 1973 required Fish full spawning beds -- Chinook salmon habitat. Over the years inundated by Lost Creek Lake –The Corp of Engineer is not complying with Federal Law – therefore our Spring Salmon Counts are dramatically reduced since the early 80's.
- Industrial marijuana growing -- Related cultural and public safety issues. Oregon is the No. 1 exporting region to the World. Curry is moving toward being one of the highest exporting counties within this geographical area.
- Rehabilitation and Reforestation Lack of Funding – Limited resources available for proper and future Forest Repair – (191,000 acres) lost due to the Chetco Bar Fire – very hazardous smoke that affected our Curry Citizens 16 days, August 2017.
- Bio-Mass --Distractions and lack of stable funding has prevented attempts at these projects from progressing.
- Port Orford School District – one of the 12 most impoverished School Districts in the Nation.
- Lobster Creek Fire Destruction 2018 – To help and position our County to fiercely defend and recover damages. To work with the Oregon Department of Forestry and Fire Investigators. Gather all facts - determine liability of 'The Next Generation Climate Justice Action Camp and Civil Liberties Defense Center.'
- Klondike Fire Destruction 2018 – (175,000 acres) -- Combining Curry and Josephine Counties, almost 450,000 acres have been lost - totally destroyed within the last 18 months Collectively between the USFS and Oregon Department of Forestry have expended in Suppression Costs over \$ 250 million dollars. Curry County and our Oregon Forests are headed for an even greater risk as we move toward the 2019 fire season -- now only (6) months away. Port Orford burned to the ground in the late 1880's and Brookings missed in 2017.

This is not a conclusive list, but it is growing with many other difficult and complex Curry County and Brookings issues! They are though problems we can solve ...

Thank You

Court Boice, Curry County Commissioner