



**HOOD RIVER COUNTY**

# BACKGROUND & VISION

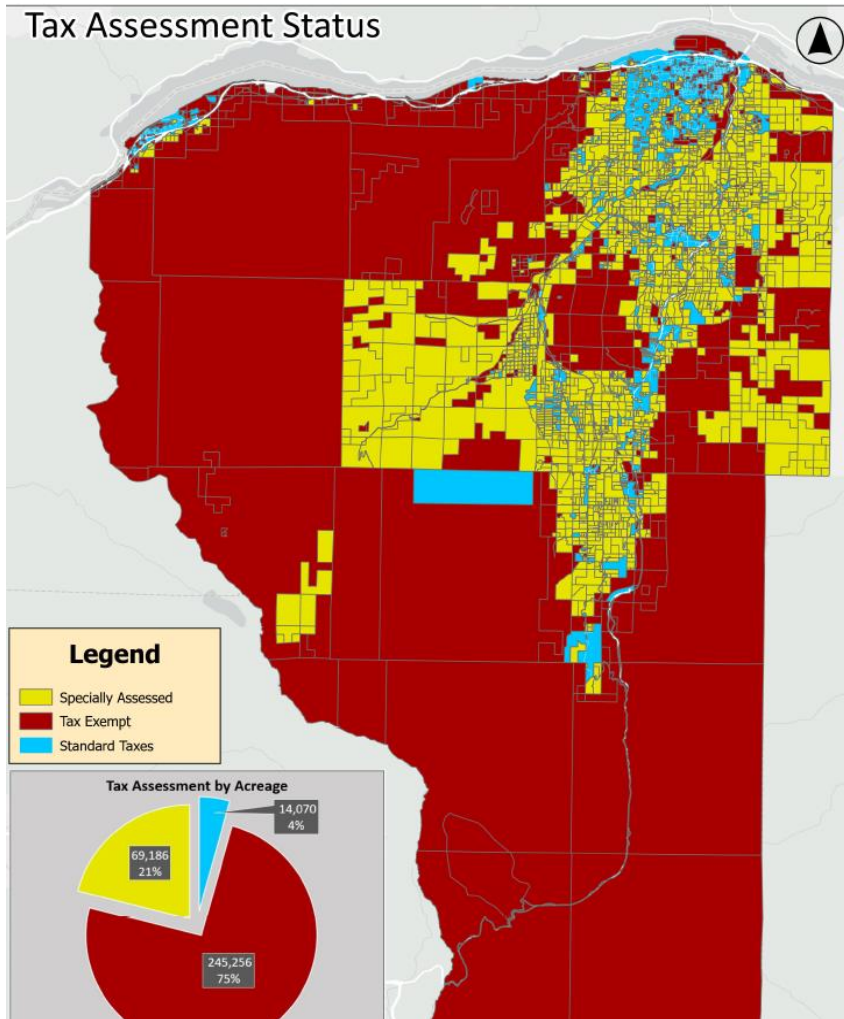


Hood River County, established in 1908, is Oregon's second smallest county, named after the Hood River that flows into the Columbia River. Its economy centers on agriculture, tourism, and industry, with the Historic Columbia River Highway and county-owned forest supporting low permanent tax rates.

*A Small County with a Big Mission: Quality of Life for All*

We aspire to enhance the quality of life for all residents, focusing on inclusive and accessible services that meet the diverse needs of our population. Our vision emphasizes our approachable nature as a small county while highlighting our ambitious goals.

# DATA



- Population: 24,361 (2025 PSU)
- County Forest: 34,577 acres
- 75% of property tax-exempt; four urban renewal areas
- Property tax: \$1.41/\$1,000 (permanent), \$1.26/\$1,000 (effective)
- 14th highest per capita tax burden
- Median income: \$84,500; 46.1% of households <\$75K; 10% in poverty
- Hispanic/Latino: 30.7% adults, 44% youth
- 70% of residents in Upper Valley, Census Tract 9504, and persistent poverty areas

# BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Jennifer Euwer  
Chair



Leticia Moretti  
Commissioner  
District 1



Arthur Babitz  
Commissioner  
District 2



Ed Weathers  
Commissioner  
District 3



Chad Muenzer  
Commissioner  
District 4

- **Legislative Authority:** Adopt local ordinances, regulations, and resolutions.
- **Budget Authority:** Review and adopt the county budget and provide oversight of fiscal and staffing decisions.
- **Policy Setting:** Set the strategic vision and priorities for county services.
- **Oversight:** Provide oversight of county operations and hold county leaders accountable for performance, compliance, and outcomes.

# HOOD RIVER COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

- Hood River County welcomed its new Administrator, Allison Williams, in early December of 2023.
- 25 years of local government experience in Central Washington and long-standing aspiration to serve as a County Administrator.
- Drawn to Hood River County by the role counties play and by the strong commitment she observed from the Board of Commissioners and community members during the interview process.



# ELECTED OFFICIALS

Certain county positions are elected directly by voters and are responsible for providing key county functions. In addition to the Board of Commissioners, the following positions are elected in Hood River County.

These officials usually have authority over their offices, even though the board controls the budget for those offices.



Matt English  
Sheriff



Matt Ellis  
District Attorney



John Harvey  
Justice of the Peace

# SERVICES THE COUNTY PROVIDES

- Public Safety and emergency services
- Public Health and Human Services
- Roads, records, and land use planning
- Environmental protection and natural resources
- Elections
- County Recorder
- Assessment & Taxation

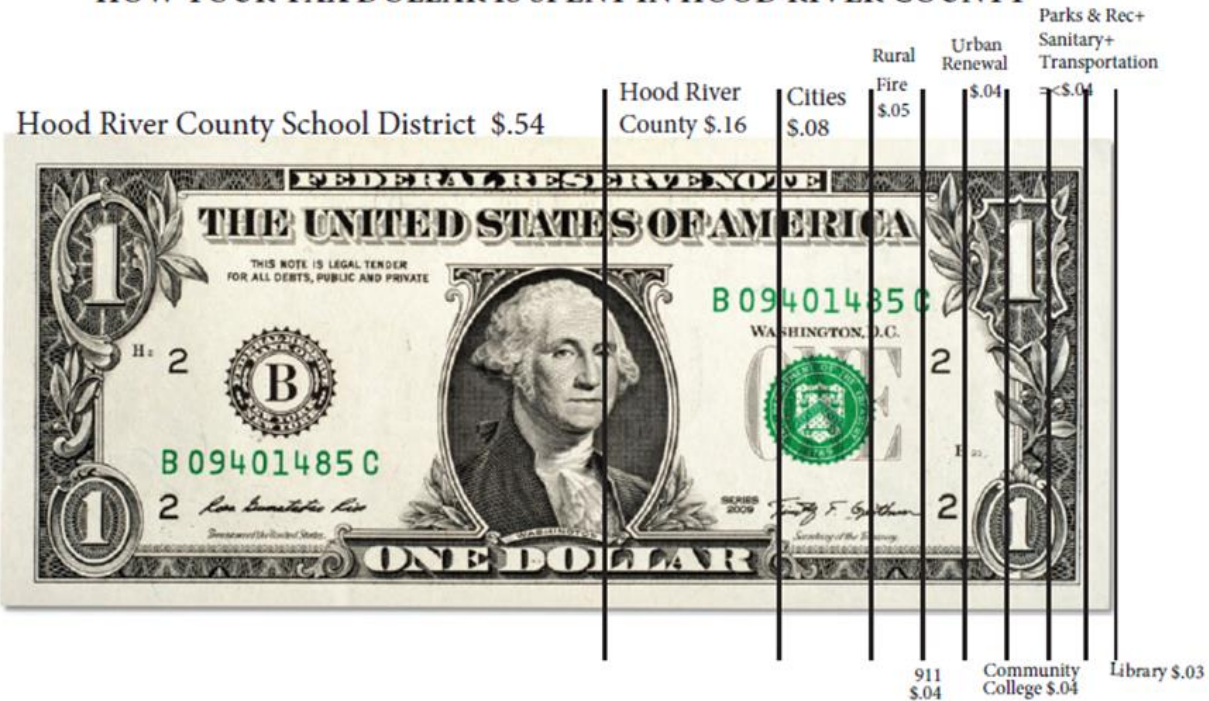
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# COUNTIES PROVIDING VITAL SERVICES



# HOW THE COUNTY IS FUNDED

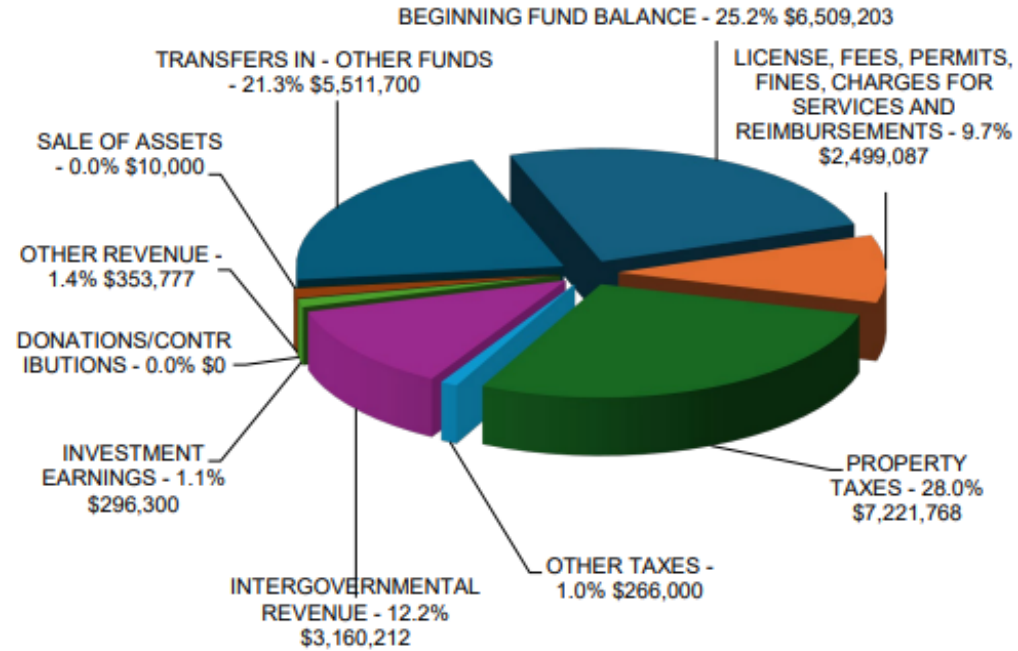
## HOW YOUR TAX DOLLAR IS SPENT IN HOOD RIVER COUNTY



## Distribution Comparison

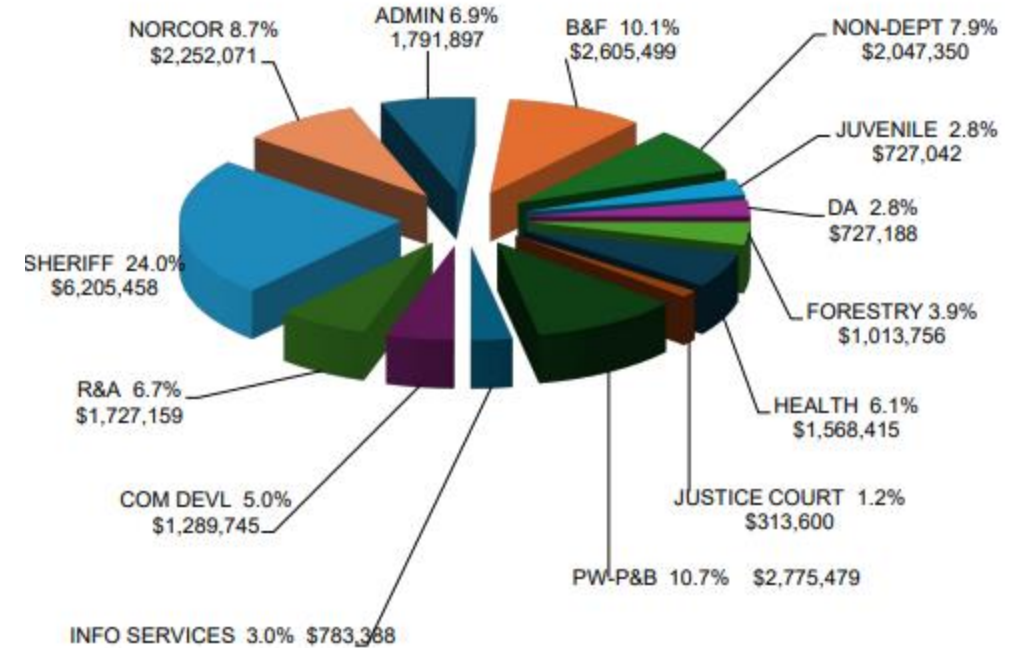
Category	2024/25		2025/26	
School & ESD	\$ 25,880,490.59	54.18%	\$ 27,552,557.73	53.63%
Hood River County	\$ 7,472,600.39	15.64%	\$ 8,004,019.55	15.58%
Cities	\$ 3,889,748.55	8.14%	\$ 4,083,707.39	7.95%
Rural Fire Protection	\$ 2,207,913.07	4.62%	\$ 2,767,905.70	5.39%
911	\$ 1,844,040.21	3.86%	\$ 1,979,396.08	3.85%
Urban Renewal	\$ 1,801,229.31	3.77%	\$ 1,915,267.90	3.73%
Columbia Gorge CC	\$ 1,651,520.93	3.46%	\$ 1,753,190.24	3.41%
Library	\$ 1,274,448.66	2.67%	\$ 1,368,021.88	2.66%
HRV Parks & Rec	\$ 1,087,076.99	2.28%	\$ 1,166,564.49	2.27%
Transportation	\$ 236,647.81	0.50%	\$ 254,030.03	0.49%
Odell Sanitary	\$ 205,237.69	0.43%	\$ 235,444.88	0.46%
Mount Hood CC	\$ 109,004.78	0.23%	\$ 175,516.14	0.34%
Ports	\$ 106,927.55	0.22%	\$ 114,890.07	0.22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 47,766,886.53</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 51,370,512.08</b>	<b>100%</b>

## GENERAL FUND REVENUES BY CATEGORY FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026



FY25-26 BFB	6,509,203.00
FY25-26 Budgeted Rev	19,365,844.00
<b>Total Rev</b>	<b>25,875,047.00</b>

## GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026



FY25-26 Budgeted Exp	23,451,490.00
FY25-26 Budgeted Contingency	1,011,144.00
FY25-26 Budgeted UEFB	1,412,413.00
<b>Total Exp</b>	<b>25,875,047.00</b>

# HOOD RIVER COUNTY WORKFORCE

- **Hood River County** currently employs **154** individuals.
- This total includes all employment categories—full-time, part-time, seasonal, extra help, reserve staff, and County Commissioner representing the entire County workforce.



# BUDGET & FINANCE

## The department is responsible for:

- General accounting and payroll
- Property tax billing & collection
- Annual budget process & document
- Treasury services for County & districts
- Annual audit coordination
- Fixed asset management
- Risk management
- Debt management
- Collection of Transient Room & Marijuana Taxes



# SHERIFF

- Enforcement
  - Patrol
  - School Resource Deputy
  - Investigations
  - Marine/OHV/Forest Patrol
- 911
- Civil
- Search and Rescue
- Emergency Management and Disaster Recovery
- Parole and Probation
- Animal Control
- Sheriff oversight of NORCOR



# DISTRICT ATTORNEY



- **Key Functions**
  - Prosecutes county criminal cases.
  - Collaborates with law enforcement, courts, and social services.
  - Provides 24/7 legal support for law enforcement.
- **Community Engagement:** Supports specialty courts and diversion programs to reduce incarceration. Partners with community organizations and provides education/training.
- **Victim Support:** Guides victims through the justice system with updates, advocacy, and referrals.
- **DUIIs**
  - Account for over 25% of cases (167 of 637 in 2025).
  - Among the most complex and resource-intensive cases handled.

# JUVENILE DEPARTMENT



- Promotes public safety by reducing juvenile delinquency through accountability, intervention, and probation services, including community service, treatment, and skill-building opportunities.
- Staffed by two juvenile counselors, a supervisor, and a director, the department manages both informal and formal law enforcement referrals, with cases increasing since 2022, including aggressive and traffic-related offenses.
- Oversight of NORCOR Juvenile

# HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

- **Public Health** covers sexual and reproductive health, communicable disease surveillance and response, immunizations, maternal/child health programming, birth/death certificates, and regional medical examiner services.
- **Environmental Health** oversees water safety, food/lodging licensing, wastewater, waste management, and disease investigations.
- **Prevention Division** focuses on substance use, mental health, and youth development.
- **Veterans Services** assists veterans with VA and ODVA resources.
- **Behavioral Health** is provided via Mid-Columbia Center for Living (MCCFL).



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



- **Planning Department**
  - Planning Commission
  - Land use hearing and decisions
  - Maintain Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance
  - Code Compliance
- **Building Department**
  - Building Inspection Program
  - Reviews applications, issues permits, and inspects buildings to ensure safety, functionality, and durability.
- **Geographic Information System (GIS)**
  - County web map
  - Trail maps
  - Special projects

# ASSESSMENT RECORDS & ELECTIONS

- **Property Records and Archive**
  - Deeds
  - Mortgages
  - Contracts
  - Tax Liens
- **Assessment**
  - Appraise Real Property and Personal Property
  - Manufacture Structures Taxation
  - Calculate taxes and apply tax rates to the taxable assessed value
- **Licenses**
  - Issues Marriage Licenses
  - Issues Declaration of Domestic Partnership
- **Voter registration and elections.**
  - Conduct local, state, and federal elections



# JUSTICE COURT



**Cascade Locks Justice Court** is a local, elected state court serving Hood River County, Oregon, established in 1939. Funded by the county but following Oregon law, it is presided over by an elected Justice of the Peace who meets continuing legal education and ethics requirements.

The court handles:

- Traffic & Vehicle Violations – including weigh station and commercial truck citations from state police and county deputies.
- Boating & Wildlife Violations – citations for boating safety and wildlife rules.
- Minor Civil & Local Violations – other infractions under county or state law.

The court processes about 3,000 cases annually, mostly vehicle- and weigh station-related.

# PUBLIC WORKS



- Maintains ~190 miles of county roads & 20+ bridges
- Services 250+ fleet vehicles & equipment
- Maintains county buildings, parks & facilities
- Responds to road hazards & disaster emergencies
- Regulates work within county right-of-way
- Oversees Engineering, Surveying & Parks/Buildings
- Staffed by 25 funded positions

# FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

- Hood River County manages about 34,557 acres of forest, with over 30,000 acres used for timber production. The goal is to generate steady revenue while protecting wildlife, water, and recreation.
- The forest has been certified by the American Tree Farm System since 2002, meeting strict environmental standards, regular inspections, and in compliance with the Oregon Forest Practices Act to protect habitats, species, and ensure reforestation.
- Ten-Year Average forest receipts \$3.6 million budgeted for 2025-2026



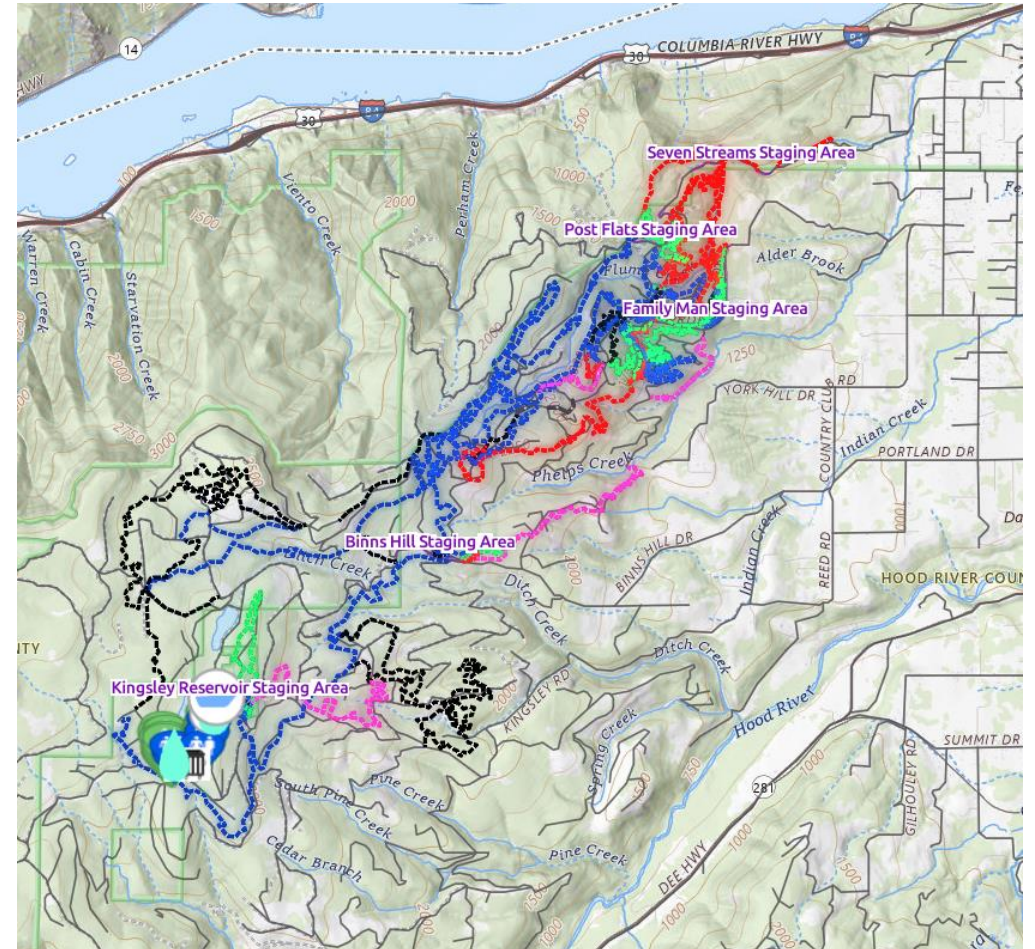
# NON-MANDATED SERVICES

## Forestry Trail Staging Areas

- Seven Streams
- Post Flats
- Family Man
- Binns Hill
- Kingsley Reservoir
- Pinemont

## Parks and Campgrounds

- Oak Grove Park
- Kingsley Campground
- Panorama Point
- Punchbowl Fall Park
- Ruthton Park
- Tucker Park Campground
- Toll Bridge Campground



# CAPITAL NEEDS

- **Courthouse Replacement:** The seismically deficient courthouse serves critical justice and public safety but faces urgent safety risks. Total cost: \$137M-\$1-\$153M
- **Neal Creek 27C09 Replacement:** The 1975 bridge is vital to local agriculture and recreation and requires full replacement by 2030. Total cost: \$4M+
- **Powerhouse Removal and Site Restoration:** Removing the Powerdale Powerhouse will address safety and environmental risks by restoring habitat, enhancing recreation, and preserving corridor history through multi-partner collaboration. Total cost: \$1M+
- **Funding to maintain roads:** chip seal or gravel



Hood River County Courthouse



Neal Creek Bridge 27C09



Powerdale Powerhouse

# TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

## 50-30-20 Partnership – State Transportation Package

Transportation Infrastructure Resiliency **Estimated Cost: \$550k–\$600k**

Hood River County seeks funding to reduce flood risk, protect critical infrastructure, enhance public safety, and improve watershed health.

## Anticipated Federal Grants Applications

- Hood River County is planning to request **10.1M+** in federal funding this year
- FY26 BUILD
- FY26 Safe Streets and Roads for All
- FY26 Federal Lands Access Program
- Ongoing funding for Community Services



*2025 winter storms caused  
\$435k+ in damage to roads  
and culverts*

# REGIONAL SUPPORT



- **Hood River–White Salmon Bridge.** Commissioner participation and county advocacy.
- **Emergency Management and Communication:** Improving processes after the Rowena fire and flood event.
- **Wildfire Mitigation:** The region received a Joint Chiefs’ Landscape Restoration grant, and the County received a BLM grant to hire a wildfire mitigation coordinator.
- **Affordable Housing:** Construction excise tax supporting Mariposa Village and the Odell Unincorporated Community Plan.

# ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TRAVEL IN HOOD RIVER COUNTY



- Hood River receives about 4 million visitors annually, generating approximately \$102 million for the local economy in 2024.
- In 2025, the county received \$299,316 in revenue from the Transient Room Tax and \$7,000 from short-term rental licenses. Recreational trail parking permits generated \$106,000 in revenue, with 82% of users coming from outside the 97031 ZIP code.
- Supporting this tourism requires significant investment in infrastructure, including roads, trails, public facilities, and emergency services such as search and rescue and marine patrol.
- Tourism-related taxes on lodging, food, and beverages help ensure that visitors share these costs, reducing the burden on local taxpayers and reliance on unstable funding sources.

**Because we are Hood  
River County, we are  
called by visitors who  
enjoy this beautiful place.**

**“Stewards of Paradise”**



*Thank you*

