



Theo Dreher
President, Oregon Lakes Association
Professor, Department of Microbiology
Oregon State University, 226 Nash Hall, Corvallis, Oregon 97331-3804
T 541-737-1795 | F 541-737-0496 | E theo.dreher@oregonstate.edu

31 May, 2019

Aron Brook
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
700 NE Multnomah St., Suite 600
Portland, OR 97232

Letter of support for the proposal to designate Waldo Lake as an Outstanding Resource Water

Oregon Lakes Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the health of Oregon's lakes, reservoirs and other water bodies. Our mission is to support better understanding, management and protection of the unique heritage embodied in Oregon's lakes, for all Oregonians to enjoy.

OLA enthusiastically supports the proposal to designate Waldo Lake as an ***Outstanding Water Resource of Oregon***. Waldo Lake is truly a gem with exceptional properties that warrants the strongest protection from degradation. Waldo Lake shares some properties with Crater Lake, another Oregon gem that does have the strong protection of being situated in a National Park: the lake is deep, has exceptional water clarity, and lies in a watershed that is almost entirely in its natural condition. Waldo Lake differs from Crater Lake by the low buffering capacity of its water and by being situated at lower altitude, surrounded by majestic forests that support a wide range of flora and fauna.

Waldo Lake satisfies several key criteria for consideration as an Outstanding Resource Water. The lake lies entirely in federally owned land in the Willamette National Forest, surrounded on three sides by the Waldo Lake Wilderness and flows into a National Wild and Scenic River (North Fork of the Middle Fork Willamette River). Its unusual value has been recognized by management for primitive recreation, with no motorized boats allowed. Its value is recognized by visitors who refresh their souls by experiencing a lake that is in an unspoiled condition, a state that is unfortunately highly unusual in the modern world. The lake and surrounding forest is important wildlife habitat and important component of a corridor of protected lands along the Cascade crest.

In view of the low turnover rate of the waters of Waldo Lake (estimated 30 year replacement time) and extremely low concentrations of nutrients and other solutes, protection as an ***Outstanding Water Resource*** is all the more critical; pollution entering the lake would have a large impact and would not be offset by being flushed out of the system. Therefore, Oregon Lakes Association urges DEQ in the strongest terms to enact this proposed designation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Theo Dreher", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Theo Dreher
President, Oregon Lakes Association
For the Oregon Lakes Association Board of Directors