



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

KIT JOHNSTON • MARY STARRETT • DAVID “BUBBA” KING

535 NE Fifth Street • McMinnville, OR 97128-4523
(503) 434-7501 • Fax (503) 434-7553
TTY (800) 735-2900 • www.yamhillcounty.gov

February 12, 2026

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
US Senate
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden
US Senate
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Andrea Salinas
US House of Representatives
403 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Support for the 2025 Grand Ronde Tribal Lands Bill

Dear Senators Merkley and Wyden, and Congresswoman Salinas,

We are writing to express our strong support for the **2026 Grand Ronde Tribal Lands Bill**. This legislation proposes the transfer of approximately 26,115 acres of U.S. Forest Service land to the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and will enhance and strengthen the stewardship of our region’s natural resources.

The Grand Ronde Tribe is a vital part of Yamhill County’s history, economy, and community. Yamhill County supports this transfer for several key reasons:

- **Proven Stewardship:** The Tribe has demonstrated excellence in sustainable forest management. Their current forest plan is among the most robust in the region, consistently resulting in forest health that exceeds that of adjacent federal or private lands.
- **Economic Vitality:** Sustainable timber harvests and Tribal resource management generate vital jobs and revenue that stimulate our local rural economies.
- **Enhanced Safety:** The Tribe’s comprehensive Wildland Fire program will strengthen fire protection and emergency response within and around the proposed area, providing a critical safety net for our county residents.
- **Public Benefit:** This transfer benefits all Oregonians. The Tribe has a long-standing history of keeping their fisheries and big-game programs open to the public. We are confident that this expansion will result in increased recreation, hunting, and fishing opportunities for the entire community.

We respectfully urge you to support this important legislation to strengthen Oregon’s forests, economy, and community health.

Sincerely,

Kit Johnston
Chair

Mary Starrett
Vice-Chair

David “Bubba” King
Commissioner

Approved by the Yamhill County Board of
Commissioners on 02/12/2026
via Board Order 26-033.