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Ken Stahr  
Surface Water Hydrology Manager  
Oregon Water Resources Department  
Co-Chair, Oregon Drought Readiness Council

Matt Marheine  
Deputy Director  
Oregon Office of Emergency Management  
Co-Chair, Oregon Drought Readiness Council

RE: Oregon County Drought

June 9, 2020

Mr. Stahr and Mr. Marheine:

Josephine County, by and through its Board of Commissioners, requests that the Governor of Oregon issue an executive order for all of Josephine County under the provisions of ORS 536 as a direct result of severe and continuing/projected drought conditions.

There is the potential for the Josephine County agricultural and livestock, and recreational, river, tourism and related economies to experience widespread and severe economic damage and injury resulting from extreme weather conditions within the county.

Josephine County has already formally declared a drought and has attached a copy of the adopted resolution for your files.

The Josephine County Board of Commissioners has determined that additional action by and support from the state is needed. This may include assistance from the Oregon Water Resources Department and other Oregon executive branch agencies, operating within their statutory authorities.

Josephine County Board of Commissioners therefore requests an executive order from the Governor, declaring drought in Josephine County.

We extend in advance our appreciation for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Darin J. Fowler, Chair  
Josephine County Commissioner

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR JOSEPHINE COUNTY STATE  
OF OREGON**

IN THE MATTER OF THE DECLARATION OF A )  
STATE OF DROUGHT EMERGENCY FOR )  
JOSEPHINE COUNTY, OREGON )

**RESOLUTION NO. 2020-024**

WHEREAS ORS 401.305 provides authority for Josephine County to act as an emergency management agency and to establish policies and protocols for defining and directing responsibilities during time of emergency; and

WHEREAS pursuant to ORS Chapter 401 and the Charter for Josephine County, the Board of Commissioners has enacted Resolution 2017-019, which provides executive responsibility in times of emergency and which provides the procedures for declaring a State of Emergency; and

WHEREAS the Josephine County Board of Commissioners finds that there is the potential for the Josephine County agricultural and livestock industries, and recreational, river, tourism and related economies to experience widespread and severe economic damage and injury resulting from extreme weather conditions within the County; and

WHEREAS annual water supplies available for irrigators and ranchers within Josephine County are a function of available water in the Rogue, Applegate and Illinois Rivers and their tributaries, and in the Lost Creek and Applegate Reservoirs; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture has estimated that in this water year, from October 1, 2019 through June 1, 2020, the Rogue Basin is at 43 percent of total average snowpack and only 70 percent of normal precipitation; and

WHEREAS Josephine County has approximately 46,116 acres of land that are under irrigation, and many farmers, ranchers and vineyards rely solely upon these sources, which are not augmented by local reservoirs; and the tributaries to the Rogue, Illinois and Applegate Rivers are in extreme jeopardy of drying, as they rely upon annual snowpack to run; and

WHEREAS the above conditions result in loss of economic stability for agriculture, recreation and tourism industries, pasture shortages, decrease in feed production, shortened growing season and decreased water supplies for Josephine County agricultural, vineyard and livestock producers; and

WHEREAS this multi-year cumulative drought has resulted in decreased fuel moisture and early onset fire danger; and

WHEREAS Josephine County continues to experience large wildfires, which significantly impact the county and its residents both during the event and for several subsequent years; and

WHEREAS, the Josephine County Board of Commissioners determines that extraordinary measures must be taken to alleviate suffering of people and livestock, to protect or mitigate economic loss and to be responsive to the threat of wildfires; and

WHEREAS, the Josephine County Board of Commissioners requests special preference for domestic water use; and

WHEREAS all available resources have been expended to respond to the drought emergency;

**NOW, THEREFORE,**

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Josephine County Board of Commissioners formally declares a State of Emergency for Josephine County, effective this \_\_\_\_ day of June, 2020, for all areas of Josephine County, including the incorporated cities of Grants Pass and Cave Junction; and

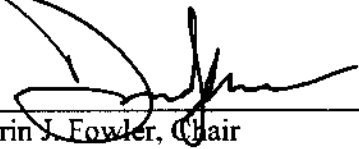
IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that upon this Declaration of a State of Emergency, the Emergency Manager of Josephine County shall have authority to respond to the emergency and implement the Josephine County Emergency Operations Plan pursuant to Resolution No. 2017-019; and

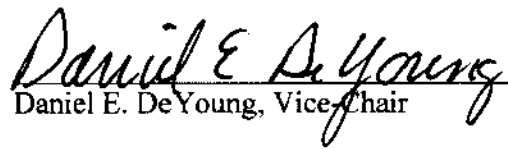
IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Emergency Manager or her designee shall take all necessary steps authorized by law to coordinate response and recovery from this emergency, including but not limited to requesting assistance from the State of Oregon; and


IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that pursuant to ORS 401.165, the Board of Commissioners requests that the Honorable Kate Brown, Governor of Oregon, declare a Drought Emergency for all of Josephine County due to severe and continuing drought conditions; and that the Oregon Department of Water Resources make available in Josephine County: Temporary Transfers of Water Rights, Emergency Water Use Permits and Use of Existing Right Option/Agreement, and other Federal and State drought assistance and programs as needed; and

DATED this 9<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2020

**JOSEPHINE COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Darin J. Fowler, Chair

  
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Daniel E. DeYoung, Vice Chair

  
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Lily N. Morgan, Commissioner