

Forestry department restricts land use for fire danger

Wallowa County Chieftain

LA GRANDE — As conditions across Northeastern Oregon have shifted to warmer and drier weather in the height of summer, the Oregon Department of Forestry — Northeast Oregon District has increased public use restrictions on lands protected by ODF, according to a press release.

"This year has been unique with a slow start to warmer and drier condi-

tions," said Matt Hoehna, assistant district forester. "However, with extreme heat this last week, the vegetation and fuels have changed dramatically. It does not take long for a fire to ignite and carry with the drier fuels that we are seeing in the district. We must consider our options in reducing the number of preventable fires."

Effective Wednesday, Aug. 3, the ODF added restrictions for lands within the district. The restrictions

affect both landowners and the general public.

The regulated use closure affects private, state, county, municipal and tribal lands in seven counties: Baker, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa and small portions of Grant, Malheur and Morrow counties.

The restrictions include the following fire-prevention measures:

- Open fires are prohibited, even at designated campgrounds, including campfires, charcoal fires,

cooking fires and warming fires.

- Nonindustrial use of chain saws is prohibited.

- Internal combustion engine use, except for motor vehicles is prohibited.

- Smoking is prohibited while traveling, except in vehicles on improved roads, in boats on the water or at a cleared area.

- Use of motor vehicles, including motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles is prohibited except on improved

roads, except for the commercial culture and harvest of agricultural crops.

- Cutting, grinding and welding of metal is prohibited.

- Mowing of dried and cured grass with power driven equipment is prohibited.

- Use of fireworks is prohibited.

- Any electric fence controller in use shall be listed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory or be cer-

tified by the Department of Consumer and Business Services and operated in compliance with manufacturer's instructions.

Aside from these restrictions, also prohibited is the use of exploding targets and tracer ammunition. Debris burning is prohibited, which includes burn piles and burn barrels.

These restrictions shall remain in effect until replaced, suspended, or terminated by additional proclamations.

County energy planning launched

Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Community input is being sought for a comprehensive Community Energy Strategic Planning process to proactively plan and manage Wallowa County's energy future, according to a press release.

The effort is being launched in a collaboration between the Wallowa County Board of Commissioners and Wallowa Resources Community Energy Program, with funding from Energy Trust of Oregon.

The move comes after years of quiet discussion, energy development and energy challenges, the release stated, and focuses a special eye on lowering energy costs and stabilizing energy access for the county's "end of the line" communities.

The effort will use the tagline, "We have Good Energy."

Early estimates show county residents currently spend \$30-\$40 million annually for various types of energy, according to Nils Christoffersen, Wallowa Resources executive director. He said most of those dollars currently leave the county.

"Finding ways to keep some of them working here creates real opportunities for all of us," he said.

The plan takes a hard look



Contributed Photo
Community input is being sought for a comprehensive Community Energy Strategic Planning process.

at how all kinds of energy is used in the county right now and then figuring out what residents can do to lower energy costs for everyone, how to put those saved dollars to work locally, how to ensure having stable, reliable access to energy for critical services in times of emergency and at the same time, how to be good stewards of the environment, according to Joe Basile, plan manager and Wallowa Resources Community Energy program manager.

Critically important too, Basile said, "this energy plan will also deliver a comprehensive prioritized list of local energy opportuni-

ties with short- and long-term strategies and funding to make projects happen."

"This is a community-generated plan," County Commissioner John Hillock said. "We are wanting input and assistance from interested groups and individuals from every sector of the community — from homeowners and renters to ag to business and beyond."

An 11-member leadership team has been established and team members are now beginning to identify key stakeholder groups and interested individuals willing to contribute some time and expertise in small group work sessions over the next several

months, Basile said. The team is headed by Mike Hayward, a former county commissioner and past general manager of Wallowa County Grain Growers. Members include Ryan Sheehy of Fleet Solar; Sara Miller of the Northeast Oregon Economic Development District; Travis Boyd of Wallowa Valley Networks; Paul Karvoski, Wallowa County emergency services manager; Stacy Beckman, Wallowa County Grain Growers; Andy McKee, a local developer; Joe Dawson, ag/real estate; Franz Goebel, Wallowa County planning director; Jennifer Piper, of the Wallowa County Chamber of Commerce; Dan McCarthy, Hospital Facilities Manager; and Emily Bratcher, Wallowa Resources Youth Education.

This plan is intended as a blueprint for the next 10-20 years, Hayward said. "We want the people who will be impacted to be part of the planning. Stay tuned."

tors are invited to stay for a 2 p.m. session on teaching Nez Perce history and culture. The Josephy Center is developing boxes of Nez Perce teaching materials — each elementary school in the county will get its own box of materials — and park staff will be here to provide more materials and information for educators.

For more information, contact Rich Wand-schneider at the center at 541-432-0505.

Joseph City Council meeting moved to Aug. 11

JOSEPH — The regular Joseph City Council meeting for August has been moved to Aug. 11, at 7 p.m. at the Joseph Events Community Center, according to a press release.

Agendas will be posted at the city's website by noon Aug. 9 or sooner, the release stated.

The council regularly meets on the first Thursday of each month.

New exhibit reception at Josephy Center

JOSEPH — A new exhibit at the Josephy Center for Arts and Culture focuses on Wild Landscape Imnaha and is on

display until Sept. 9.

What is a wild landscape? One thing that makes Eastern Oregon so special is untouched and undeveloped landscapes. The Wild Landscape exhibit will celebrate Imnaha's diverse and wild lands. This means the landscape is the focal point with no human-made objects visible in the art works.

Award winners will be announced during the exhibit's opening reception from 7-9 p.m. Aug. 5. Hors d'oeuvres will be provided and drinks will be available for purchase.

New 4-H club brings back familiar name

LOSTINE — There is a new 4-H club in the lower valley. The club includes Cloverbuds (grades K-third) and Juniors (grades fourth through sixth).

The Junior division members are working on large-animal projects including pig, goat and sheep projects for the Wallowa County Fair. The club meets at the Southfork Grange in Lostine and members volunteered as helpers at the Southfork Grange's May Day event.

Club members are doing a horticulture activity during the spring season with volunteer instructor June Colony.

The club members are also interested in learning about photography, cooking and sewing.

The adult leader of the club is Sadie Kennedy. Lostine Rascal 4-H Club officers are: President Camelia St George, Vice President Dillon Wortman, Secretary Cheona Brockman, Treasurer Tai-lynn Clary, Sergeant of Arms Edith Kennedy and Reporter Lydia Hawkins-Hogrefe.

Joseph Chamber to meet Aug. 5

JOSEPH — Now that Chief Joseph Days is over, the Joseph Chamber of Commerce is gearing up for the town's next event, the Wallowa Mountain Cruise scheduled for Aug. 26-27.

The chamber will hold a meeting to discuss the event — and other business — at 8 a.m. Friday, Aug. 5, at the Wallowa County Museum.

Volunteers are being sought to set up beforehand and tear down after, including adding and removing no parking signs and barricades. Volunteers are asked to sign up to help.

Also on the agenda will be marketing, music, the annual and a nominating committee.

The chamber, which meets the first Friday of each month, will next meet Sept. 2.

— Chieftain staff

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Commissioners to start psilocybin ban process

Public hearings to precede ballot measure

Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Two public hearings will be held this month prior to approval by the Wallowa County Board of Commissioners of an ordinance to declare a ban on psilocybin service centers and the manufacture of psilocybin products within the county, the county website states.

The commissioners will hold the first hearing Wednesday, Aug. 3, at 11 a.m. following their regular 9 a.m. meeting. The second hearing will be at 10 a.m. on Aug. 17.

The hearings are a necessary step to get the matter on the Nov. 8 ballot to give voters in the county the chance to ban psilocybin.

Oregon voters in 2020 approved Ballot Measure 109, which created Oregon Psilocybin Services as a new section within the Oregon Health Authority. The commissioners' intended action would ban psilocybin in unincorporated areas of the county. Municipalities have the option to approve or deny psilocybin services.

Another public hearing is planned for Aug. 3. The county is completing an Emergency Small Business and Micro-Enterprise Assistance Grant Program funded with Community Development Block Grant funds from the Oregon Business Development Department, accord-

ing to the county website. The location of the project is throughout the county. It is estimated that the project has benefited at least 29 people of whom 100% were low or moderate income.

The purpose of the hearing is for the commissioners to obtain citizens views about the project.

In other matters at the Aug. 3 regular meeting, the commissioners plan to:

- Consider an easement request by Ryan Lingard for a new driveway and culvert on Hurricane Creek Road.
- Approve Stacey Mueller's separation from service in the Information Technology Department and then be rehired on a temporary basis.
- Approve a salary change for Wes Garth as a reserve deputy with the Wallowa County Sheriff's Office.
- Approve the hiring of Samuel Witherup as a temporary youth employee.

Births
A son, Henry Joseph Perren, was born July 20, 2022 in Enterprise to Matthew and JoAnna Perren of Enterprise. Grandparents are Virginia Patton, Tim Patton, Christina Girtz and Brian Perren.

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