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WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



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Wolf delisting meets first legal challenge

Three groups seek review, claiming insufficient science behind decision

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

On Dec. 30, three environmental groups jointly filed a petition for review with the Oregon Court of Appeals, asking the court to examine the state's recent decision to remove the gray wolf from

its endangered species list. Oregon Wild, The Center for Biological Diversity and Cascadia Wildlands filed the legal challenge.

The commission voted to delist the wolf in a 4-2 decision on Nov. 9.

"We're asking the court to void the rule change that

delisted wolves," said Nick Cady, attorney for Cascadia Wildlands.

Cady cited several reasons for the challenge, including accusations that the agency violated state statutes in making the decision.

"The statute requires the agency go through a peer-re-

view process that requires them to employ/apply the best available science," he said. "It also requires them to make a finding that wolves are recovered throughout a significant portion of their range. The main gist of our suit is that those things have not been satisfied."

Cady said the groups did not ask for an injunction, a move which would have sought a more immediate response from the court system. He said the appellate court has an extreme case load, and he did not expect a legal resolution for some time.

"These things can last for

a couple of years, at least," he said.

Rob Klavins, Northeast Oregon Field Coordinator for Oregon Wild, said the decision to seek legal recourse was made with great reluctance.

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TAKING THE (POLAR)

PLUNGE



Kathleen Ellyn/Chieftain

Left to right: Amy Roseberry, 25, of Austin, Texas, accepted the challenge from her mother, Leita Barlow, 55, of Joseph and was joined by Kate Forster of Enterprise in the 2016 Polar Plunge on a bitter-cold morning Jan. 1 at Wallowa Lake.

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Trail crew first in, last out at sled dog race

Volunteers the behind-the-scenes heroes of Eagle Cap Extreme

By Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

Eagle Cap Extreme Sled Dog Races volunteer Glenn McDonald, 76, of Enterprise is still heading out early and coming in late as a key member of the trail crew for the race.

He's been doing that since the event's inception. This year, for the 11th version — Jan. 20-23 at Ferguson Ridge Ski Area — he gets to do it with a dynasty: his son, Clay McDonald, 50, of Gresham, and grandson Alex Coutant, 18, of Enterprise will be part of his "point team" this year.



Courtesy photo

Trail Crew at Salt Creek Summit, marking trail. Glen McDonald back when he was Trail Boss.

An army of volunteers 200 individuals strong makes the race the success it is, year after year. About 15 of them are on the trail crew that goes out before the race starts to make sure the

trails are groomed (and stay groomed), multiple race routes are marked, mushers are accounted for throughout the race, and emergency services can be notified in case of an accident.

The trail team is out there four days before the race even starts, getting the routes ready. The Wallowa County Gamblers Snowmobile Club packs the trails in the Eagle Cap Wilderness in advance of the race every year, and now the trail team begins putting up colored markers, different ones for each of the four races "from Fergi to Salt Creek down to Lick Creek and up over the 200 loop to near 7,000 feet and then back down to Lick Creek again and ..." Glenn McDonald knows the route by heart and keeps on describing the route for 200 miles. They do a good job. The Eagle Cap Extreme has a reputation for being one of the best-marked race courses around.

At 76, Glenn McDonald says the hardest part of the job is the sleep deprivation.

"I'm usually pretty worn down by the end," he admits.

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