

PAVED TRAIL:

Working group will be convened next month

Continued from page 1

its own comment and approval process.

There are plenty of issues to work through. The U.S. Forest Service withdrew last spring from a proposal to build a paved path from Sisters to Black Butte Ranch, in the face of vociferous opposition from some local residents. Many opponents not only disliked the proposed path, but also felt marginalized by the approval process. The debate over the path has been a divisive and sometimes bitter one in the community.

The makeup of the Thursday meeting itself raised hackles, because it excluded known opponents of the path. To mitigate abraded feelings on that score, Unger and Oregon Solutions facilitator Mike Mills convened a separate meeting with a half-dozen trail opponents prior to the main meeting.

Some opponents expressed a wary openness to a new process.

“A lot of damage has been done, and it hasn’t been done by anybody but the pro-trail people,” said Tollgate resident Steve Madsen. “You’re starting in a deep hole.”

He said it will be crucial to “keep the name-calling out of the process.”

However, Madsen indicated a willingness to be open

— if trail proponents are.

“If you can get the bicycle people to budge on the trail, I think you’ll have good results,” he said. “Don’t smoke us, don’t lead us on, don’t manipulate stuff to help their side.”

Mills acknowledged that the first step in a new, collaborative process is a cease-fire.

“The first thing everybody needs to do is put their guns on the table or in the back closet,” he said.

Early this week, however, Mike Morgan, who was co-lead objector in the previous Forest Service process, told Mills that he does not support this new approach.

Morgan wrote to several elected representatives saying, “People are angry at the approach that isolates, marginalizes, and demeans the people that oppose the trail for many reasons... This trail will not be shoved down the throats of the people in this community; they will fight back and they will litigate if necessary.”

The community leaders at the main Thursday meeting indicated a willingness to accommodate concerns — though attendees clearly continue to ardently believe in the value to the community of paved multiuse paths.

Sisters Trails Alliance President Chuck Humphreys pledged himself to an “open, robust and very fair public process... I don’t think anything is carved in stone.” He indicated a willingness to “deal with some of the issues

that people have raised that are legitimate.”

Proponents of the paved path believe that they already have significant community support for a project, but they have been plagued by the difficulty of adequately gauging and articulating that support. Sisters restaurant owner Jennifer McCrystal noted that many of her patrons expressed support for the trail, but they have been unwilling to do so publicly. Community surveys have shown favor toward a paved path system, but opponents challenge their validity.

Melvin Herburger raised key questions: When will advocates and the Forest Service be able to determine that there is, in fact, significant public support? What is the threshold for “pulling the trigger”?

“Why even go through the process if you’re waiting to get to the 100 percent?” he asked. “Where do you draw that line at?”

According to Mills, the make-up of the small working group is key. If everybody feels their viewpoints have been represented, the end product is more likely to have clear public support.

The hope, Mills said, is that “at the end of the day a proposal can be moved to the Forest Service that has more community buy-in.”

Mills hopes to have a working group pulled together by the end of April.

For more information on Oregon Solutions, visit <http://orsolutions.org>.

Key concerns about a paved trail

By **Jim Cornelius**
News Editor

A new Collaborative Local Agreement-Seeking Process (CLASP) will have a raft of issues to sort through in trying to come up with a consensus-based paved-trail project in Sisters Country.

For some, the whole idea is a non-starter; they don’t want to see a seven-mile paved path through the ponderosa stands west of town at all, seeing it as a violation of the natural world. And some don’t want to see a couple million dollars spent on such a project when there are other, more pressing transportation needs.

Others are OK with a paved path — they just don’t want it running near or into their property. A trio of Black Butte Ranch (BBR) residents who met with Commissioner Alan Unger and Oregon Solutions facilitator Mike Mills last Thursday (*see related story, page 1*) emphasized that Black Butte Ranch is private property. They do not want

path-users rolling into BBR and using private bike paths and other facilities.

BBR resident Sonia Lamoreaux told *The Nugget* that she is in favor of a trail system, but she thinks it should run on the north side of Highway 20 and go into Camp Sherman and loop around Green Ridge, thus avoiding Tollgate and Black Butte Ranch and alleviating residents’ concerns. She believes such a trail network would ultimately be more beneficial for users, too.

Other concerns have been raised about ongoing maintenance and whether the path will be ADA (Americans With Disabilities Act) compliant, which is a consideration for grant funding.

Paved path advocates cite the benefits that have accrued to other communities who have created such systems. A hard, smooth surface allows all kinds of users to safely enjoy an excursion into the forest, and paved trails are an attractive amenity that appeals to tourists and local users

alike.

One of the key questions is the breadth and depth of community support for a paved path. Does the opposition represent a significant portion of the Sisters population? Or is it a particularly motivated and vocal minority?

Forest Service representative Shane Jeffries told a community meeting on Thursday that “the opposition we saw as this played out was probably greater than what we originally anticipated.”

The CLASP is designed to address and work out concerns and by its very collaborative nature come up with a project that has clear and broad-based community support.

Perhaps its most important feature is that it is designed to take the heat out of the debate and foster a more productive community discussion.

As community volunteer and cycling advocate Jerry Norquist put it, “This is an opportunity to use to show that we *can* work together and come up with a solution.”

RE/MAX®
REvolution
new solutions better results

For all the things that move you.™

ilovecentraloregon.com



Peter Storton
Principal Broker/Owner
ABR, CDPE, CLHMS, CIAS



Sandy Goodsell
Principal Broker
ABR, CDPE, GRI, CIAS



Ron Roberts
Broker, CDPE



Marina McCurdy
Broker, CDPE, CIAS



John Ferguson
Broker, CDPE



Debbie Lahey
Broker
CDPE, CSP, SFR



David Miller
Principal Broker, GRI
Property Manager



Jeff Dobson
Broker
"Glad to be of service"



Jenna Silva
Broker



Matt Siegrist
Broker



Terry Kotal
Office Manager



HOLMES ROAD. This location provides extraordinary views of the Three Sisters Mountains. Horse property with 23 acres within the Sisters School District with 9 fenced and irrigated acres. The home has 4 bedrooms and 2 baths, 2,880 sq. ft. Hardwood floors family room and den/office and expansive deck. 2-car garage with additional heated bay for shop or guest quarters. Two 2-stall loafing sheds, 2 dry paddocks, outdoor arena with round pen, another shop/storage and much more. Property borders public land. **\$649,900.** 201404794

10561 SW Woodward Rd. Culver, OR 97734

195.07 ac | 3 bd | 1 ba
\$465,000 MLS#201207741



693 S. Pine Meadow St. Sisters, OR 97759

3,142 sf | 3 bd | 4 b | .16 ac
\$719,000 MLS#201500386



16135 Fox Ridge Circle Sisters, OR 97759

4,358 sf | 3 bd | 4.5 ba | 2.3 ac.
\$787,500 MLS#201305203



69223 Crooked Horseshoe Sisters, OR 97759

10,403 sf | 4 bd | 5.5 ba | 10 ac.
\$1,699,900 MLS#201401164



14883 Bluegrass Loop Sisters, OR 97759

3 bd | 2 ba | 2,187 sf | .96 ac
\$399,900 MLS#201410462



Lot #12 Sun Ranch Sisters, OR 97759

Utilities in place | Access to Hwy. 20
\$99,000 MLS#201104036



1555 SW Hwy. 97 Redmond, OR 97756

Mrs Beasley's Restaurant
\$895,000 MLS#2609567



17805 Cascade Estates Bend, OR 97701

9.77 Acres - Mtn. View Homesite
\$174,900 MLS#201400614



Mini Storage Lots Sisters, OR 97759

3.6 acres — 3 Sisters Bus. Park
\$550,500 MLS#201407371



20615 Independence Way Sisters, OR 97759

Large lot in cul-de-sac
\$89,000 MLS#201500205



MLS

625 N. Arrowleaf Trail Suite 104
Next to Ray's Food Place in Sisters
541-549-3333
www.ilovecentraloregon.com