

DEADLINE: Skydive operation appears to be relocating

Continued from page 1

comes from the discussions," he wrote in an email to *The Nugget*.

The new deadline coincidentally coincides with the date of a new Oregon Department of Aviation hearing on adding Sisters Airport to Oregon's list of airports of state concern. The two processes are separate and ODA will act only on whether the airport meets one or more of the three criteria for listing in Appendix M/Exhibit 2 as a privately owned, public-use airport of state concern.

City Manager Rick Allen informed city councilors on Monday that the Skydive Awesome operation appears to be set to move to Madras. He quoted an email stating, "We will be operating this summer in Madras, OR while the City of Sisters and the Sisters airport sorts out multiple issues regarding general aviation and jump operations."

Allen told councilors that the email "confirms what I have heard from the Sisters Airport Manager and the Madras Airport, I guess it's pretty official. Secondly I do know that some items in the drop zone at the Madras Airport were being cleared for skydivers to land, I talked with the gentleman who was coordinating the removal of some posts for safety.

"This should decrease the tensions between the neighbors and airport..."

In another matter, Sara Kelly, Aquatic Resource Coordinator for Crook, Deschutes, Harney and Malheur counties with the Department of State Lands told *The Nugget* that DSL plans to make a site visit to the airport during the last week of April to evaluate the status of a paved "runout" on the airport runway. The runout sits on common area owned by the adjacent Eagle Air Estates subdivision and may have been built on lands mapped as wetlands.

Severe fires change PNW forest ecology

By Nick Houtman
OSU College of Forestry

CORVALLIS — Over the last 30 years, the landscape annually affected by forest fires has slowly increased across the Pacific Northwest, and in some regions, severe blazes account for a higher proportion of the area burned than in the past.

As a result, the ecology of some of the region's forests is changing in unprecedented ways.

Scientists calculated that less than one-half of one percent of the region's forest is subject to fire in any given year. But in a project using satellite imagery and ground-based tree inventories, they also found that, in areas historically dominated by low- and mixed-severity fires, nearly a quarter of the burned landscape was subject to patches of high-severity fires that often exceeded 250 acres in size.

Studies of fires prior to 1900 suggest that severe fires occurred over smaller patches of forest and accounted for a much smaller proportion of the total burned area than they do today.

To reach their conclusions, researchers analyzed images taken by the LANDSAT satellite between 1985 and 2010. The study evaluated burned area and fire severity in seven

different ecosystems, ranging from high-elevation subalpine forests to those dominated by western hemlock, ponderosa pine and Douglas fir. Since high-severity fire kills trees outright, the scientists were able to link fire-related tree mortality to changes in images from year to year.

They published their findings in the journal *Ecosphere*.

"Large fires can have significant social and economic costs, but they are also playing an important role in the ecology of our forests," said Matthew Reilly, lead author and a post-doctoral researcher in the College of Forestry at Oregon State University.

"From a regional biodiversity perspective, they are enhancing diversity by creating early seral habitats (the first stage of forest development dominated by grasses, forbs and shrubs). These provide important habitats for species that depend on open conditions and fire-killed trees (or snags). Such habitats are very rare and dispersed across the region but are concentrated in hotspots of high-severity fire like southwest Oregon, Santiam Pass in central Oregon, the North Cascades in Washington and more recently the Blue Mountains, following the Canyon Creek Complex fire near John Day."

About 98 percent of forest fires are put out before they

have a chance to grow, said Reilly.

"Our study is really about the other two percent that tend to burn during the hottest, driest, windiest conditions," he said. "Suppression tends to be more effective when it's cool and wet."

More high-severity fires occur in hotter, drier years, the scientists said. But in dry areas east of the Cascades, fires burn a smaller portion of the landscape than they did before 1900. Consequently, forests are becoming denser as vegetation accumulates, creating what scientists call a "fire deficit."

"In the ponderosa pine forests in eastern Oregon, we estimated it would take about 380 years at the current rate for fire to cover the whole region," said Reilly. "But historically, we know that those forests were subject to fire every 12 to 28 years."

The scientists' results are

consistent with other studies that document a fire deficit in the forests of the western United States, but this is the first study to document how recent fires vary in different ecosystems across the Pacific Northwest.

"There's no one out there who thinks that fire will play the historical role that it used to. We just can't really have that," Reilly said. "But we need to figure out how to let the low- to moderate-severity fires burn in forests where fire was frequent historically. There is growing consensus among scientists that use of managed wildfire may be one way to do this, especially in cool, wet years."

Researchers at the University of Vermont, the USDA Forest Service and the College of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences at OSU were co-authors on the paper. Funding for the study was provided by the USDA Forest Service.

Can You Free Yourself of Some Investment-Related Taxes?

Tax Freedom Day generally falls around this time each year. This is the day when the nation as a whole has earned enough money to pay off its total tax bill for the year, according to the calculations made by the Tax Foundation. So you may want to use Tax Freedom Day to think about ways you can liberate yourself from some of the investment-related taxes you may incur.

Of course, Tax Freedom Day is something of a fiction, in practical terms, because most people pay their taxes throughout the year via payroll deductions. Also, you may not mind paying your share of taxes, because your tax dollars are used in many ways — law enforcement, food safety, road maintenance, public education, and so on — that benefit society. Still, you may be able to reduce those taxes associated with your investments, leaving you more money available to help you work toward your important goals, such as a comfortable retirement. Here are some suggestions for making investing less "taxing":

- **Contribute regularly to tax-advantaged retirement plans.** Contribute as much as you can afford to your IRA and your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan. Traditional IRA earnings grow tax deferred, and your contributions may be tax-deductible, depending on your income. (Taxes will be due upon withdrawal, however, and withdrawals made before you turn 59½ may be subject to a 10% IRS penalty.) Your 401(k) or similar plan also provides the opportunity for tax-deferred earnings growth. Roth IRA contributions are not deductible, but your earnings are distributed tax-free, provided you don't take withdrawals until you're 59½ and you've had your account at least five years.

- **Follow a "buy-and-hold" strategy.** If you sell investments you've owned for less than a year, and their value has increased, you will have to pay capital gains taxes at your personal income tax rate, which, in early 2017, could be as high as 39.6%. But if you hold investments for at least a year before selling them, you'd be assessed the long-term capital gains rate, which tops out at 20%. Be aware, though, that the Trump administration and Congress seem likely to change the tax rates. Early plans call for a maximum personal income tax rate of 33%, with the top rate for capital gains and dividends either staying at 20%, or possibly being reduced to 16.5%. In any case, you'll still come out ahead, tax-wise, by holding your investments long enough to receive the long-term capital gains rate.

- **Consider municipal bonds** — If you are in one of the higher income brackets, you might benefit from investing in municipal bonds, which are typically used to finance public projects, such as roads, schools, airports and infrastructure-related repairs. Interest payments from "munis" are typically exempt from federal income taxes and may also be exempt from state and local taxes, depending on the state in which the bond issuer is located. Interest payments from some types of municipal bonds may be subject to the alternative minimum tax (AMT). Again, though, watch for developments from Washington, as both the Trump administration and some congressional leaders favor eliminating the AMT. When charting your investment strategy, consider your risk tolerance, time horizon, family situation and estate plans. But investment-related taxes should also be in your strategic mix — so look for opportunities to keep these taxes under control

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

FUDGE
for Easter Dessert!

We have 21 flavors of fudge that we make right here in Sisters. Come pick out a few flavors — your guests will be impressed

Open Every Day. Stop & Shop in Sisters!

SISTERS CASCADE
541-549-8591 | 150 W. Cascade Ave.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life." John 11:25

Holy Thursday, April 13:
Mass of the Lord's Supper, 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday, April 14: Stations of the Cross, 3:00 p.m.
Celebration of the Lord's Passion, 7:00 p.m.

Holy Saturday, April 15: Easter Vigil, 8:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 16: Mass 10:00 a.m.

Saint Edward the Martyr Roman Catholic Church
123 Trinity Way, Sisters | 541-549-9391 | www.stedwardsisters.org

Darren Layne, CFP®
Financial Advisor
411 E Cascade Ave Ste 102
Sisters, OR 97759
541-549-8739

www.edwardjones.com
Member SIPC

Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING