

LEWIS: Program gets high school students licensed

Continued from page 3

physician, they must pass the FAA written exam and an oral exam, and they must pass a check flight with an FAA examiner. Lewis plans to take his oral exam and check flight this summer.

“My goal is to earn my private certificate before I leave for college in fall,” said Lewis.

Lewis has been accepted and is committed to attending the Colorado School of Mines to study mechanical engineering in fall.

“Mines is ranked the number one engineering school in the country, and admission is extremely competitive. I think having flight training on my résumé helped me get into Mines. It demonstrates I have perseverance to achieve long-term goals, and that’s what the top colleges are looking for,” he said.

Currently in its fourth year, the Flight Science class has become one of the most popular courses at SHS. With two full classes this year, the goal of the Sisters High School Flight Science program is to provide an integrated aviation offering that also enables students to reach a real-world goal of earning their private pilot license while in high school. Mastering this material requires both academic study and actual flight experience.

While the academic ground school curriculum is free to students at SHS, flight instruction costs are not covered by the school. Lewis and other Flight Science students have applied for scholarships and grants to help pay for the cost of flight instruction.

Outlaw Aviation was started three years ago by Benny and Julie Benson, to assist SHS students in paying for their flight training. The

Bensons, who also own the Sisters Airport, purchased the Cessna 172 as a trainer aircraft, and offer the students a discounted rate for flight time. In addition, the Bensons provide a matching scholarship fund. For all funds a student brings to their flight training, whether it’s from other scholarships such as The Roundhouse Foundation or AOPA, or from family contributions, the Bensons match those funds.

Lewis has been awarded several scholarships through The Roundhouse Foundation, and those funds were matched by the Bensons through a credit with Outlaw Aviation.

“Their generosity is incredible,” said Robin Lewis Kane, Sam’s mother. “Sam has learned to fly at virtually no expense to us!”

Lewis and his family moved to Sisters two years ago from California.

“Sam has had an interest in flying from a young age, so when we learned about the flight program here in Sisters, that the students actually get to fly, the decision to move here was an easy one,” said Robin. “There are other aviation programs at the high school level, but they don’t have a way for students to get flight time in a real airplane. We are lucky Sam was able to participate in this unique opportunity.”

CLOSURE: Area near creek remains open for day use

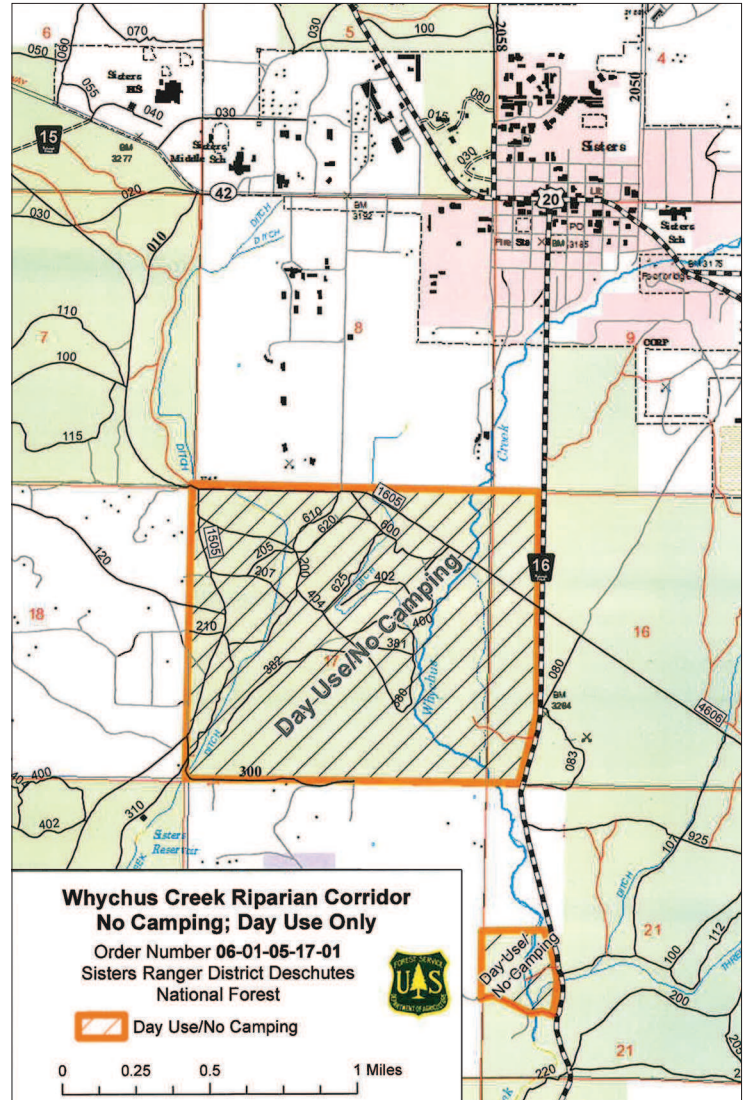
Continued from page 1

Campers may still establish themselves in the area in violation of the closure, Nelson-Dean acknowledged, but having the closure in place will make the rules easier to enforce.

Nelson-Dean said that day-users of the forest, such as hikers, have expressed fear about going into the area. She said that, after the closure, “we hope that day use will increase in that area.”

Asked whether the closure will simply move the problem to another area of the forest, Nelson-Dean said, “I don’t have a real good answer to that question.”

She said that the proximity to Sisters and the established nature of the camping area among the homeless population has made the area in question particularly attractive to long-term illegal campers. The two-year closure will give the Forest Service time to evaluate impacts there and in other areas of the forest.



GRAPHIC PROVIDED

The closure area is near the City of Sisters.

In general the overnight camping closure applies to Section 17, Township 15, South; Range 10 East, which is west of Forest Road 16 (see map).

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