

TREE CUTTING: Tree will roll through Sisters on November 12

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realize how lucky we are to live in such a beautiful state,” Buckmann said. “I felt incredibly honored to be there for Sisters. I was thanked more times than I can remember for being there. People were happy, and it was about this moment in time where Oregon will be part of the Christmas tradition in Washington, D.C.”

Buckmann was thrilled to receive a branch from the tree as a souvenir.

The holiday tree represents the hope, goodwill and spirit of the people of the United States.

Tracy Beck, forest supervisor with Willamette National Forest, counted 26 rings on one of the souvenir rounds taken eight feet up the tree and estimated the noble to be about 35 years old.

“The amount of time and planning to put this together was incredible,” Buckmann said. “A shout-out to the Sweet Home Tree Committee and the hundreds of others to make this memorable moment.”

Spectators watched through the rainfall as crews cut down the tree.

Jonah Gladney, firefighter for the U.S. Forest Service, took time out from leading a crew of wildland firefighters on a prescribed burn in Detroit to harvest the tall noble fir. The tree was supported with two slings from a crane as it was cut, to prevent it from falling and its branches from breaking. The crane and supporting equipment were provided by Papé and Axis Crane, a main sponsor of the event.

After the tree was cut it made its way down eight miles of gravel road on a new Kenworth W990 truck, provided by Central Oregon Truck Company (COTC) of Redmond, to Highway 20, then to Sweet Home.

Nikki Swanson, district ranger for the Sweet Home

Ranger District noted, “The architect at the capitol office chose a tree that wasn’t that easy to get to. This was by far the most beautiful tree in the forest. Cascade Timber consulting made it possible to be able to access the tree with their roadwork.”

The tree will be wrapped and prepared for the long journey east on Friday, November 9, when it departs from Sweet Home and begins its 3,000-mile road trip through Oregon and across the country to Washington, D.C.

“People were happy, and it was about this moment in time where Oregon will be part of the Christmas tradition in Washington, D.C.”
— Jeri Buckmann

The theme for this year’s tree-cutting event is “Find Your Trail,” in recognition of two special anniversaries in 2018: the 50th anniversary of the National Trails System Act and the 175th commemoration of the Oregon Trail.

The Capitol Tree will travel the Oregon trail in reverse, stopping at communities along the way to Washington D.C., where there will be an official tree lighting in early December.

Oregon also provided 70 smaller trees to decorate government buildings and other public spaces. Oregonians made 10,000 crafted ornaments and 80 quilted tree skirts. Fifteen of the tree skirts were quilted by East of the Cascade Quilters in Sisters.

The tree will make 11 stops around Oregon before heading east, including one in Bend on Monday, November 12 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at 450 SW Powerhouse Dr. in the Old Mill District.

After the tree leaves Bend on Monday it will be heading through Sisters.

Birders sought for raptor survey

By Jim Anderson
Correspondent

If you’ve wanted to get to know our Northwest raptors better, now’s your chance. The East Cascade Audubon Society’s Winter Raptor Survey Project is now underway. Jeff Fleischer, who is spearheading the 15th season of surveys under the auspices of Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA), says this is the first time that more than 300 survey routes will be in play.

Over 225 raptor watchers are involved with surveys conducted once a month on more than 16,000 miles of transects located throughout Oregon, Idaho, and along the Washington side of the Columbia River from the ocean to the Tri-Cities. Also from Walla Walla, along with the California portions of the Klamath Basin in south central Oregon and Northern California.

As coordinator of this project, part of Fleischer’s duties is to ensure as much coverage as possible for the routes that already exist. Following is a list of current routes that are now vacant and looking for someone to adopt them:

- Curry County North: 55 miles
- Portland I-205 to Sandy River: 52 miles
- Corbett: 44 miles

- Gresham: 49 miles
- Boring: 48 miles
- Myrtle Creek: Riddle - 60 miles
- Canyonville: 45 miles
- Hood River: 81 miles
- Klamath Marsh: 56 miles
- Agency-Ft. Klamath: 82 miles

We’re located a long way from most of those areas, but you may know of someone living in one or more of those locations who wishes they, she, or he had the opportunity to get to know our raptors better, and would like to participate in a local survey. This isn’t just for the birders who cut their teeth on binoculars, but for people who want to get to know other birds as well.

Winter Raptor Survey (WRS) encourages raptor enthusiasts to collect information on wintering diurnal raptors, and teach novice birders who would like to become Citizen Scientists “how to.” This protocol is a set of guidelines enabling motor vehicle-based observations to be recorded in a standardized format which is scalable to the skill of the observer, length of survey route and detail orientation and capability of the surveying party.

The survey’s goal is to collect — by means of uniform methods — wintering raptor information that can be useful to researchers,



PHOTO BY JIM ANDERSON

First-year golden eagle.

land management, planning agencies, and regional birding organizations. The goal of the program is also to have an enjoyable citizen science experience and bring on board new observers.

Results will be published in Hawk Migration Studies, the publication of HMANA, and eventually be incorporated into HawkCount, the HMANA database of spring and fall raptor migration monitoring site observations. For more information visit www.hmana.org, and/or contact Jeff Fleischer at dmarc-noreply@freelists.org.

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