

**LETTERS**

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tarnish a diffuse movement that shares the slogan “Black Lives Matter” with legal entities within the movement, one of whose founders has identified herself as a Marxist. For nearly everyone who has expressed support for Black Lives Matter (including Republican Senators Mike Braun and Mitt Romney), the slogan Black Lives Matter signifies opposition to the violence with which George Floyd and other Black people have been treated — to the deaths and injuries that Black people are subjected to because of the color of their skin.

I personally am well-acquainted with Marxism. I studied it in school and spent considerable time in the former Soviet Union. I am not a Marxist. I do not support anarchy. I oppose violence. I am a retired lawyer who was in private practice, who worked as in-house counsel at U.S. Bank, and who served as general counsel for two international charities. I am a wife and a mother. I support Black Lives Matter because until they do, all lives cannot matter.

Mary Chaffin

To the Editor:

Driving through Sisters this weekend on beautiful summer evenings, I was appalled to see the crowds gathered outside bars and restaurants.

Of course, you can’t eat or drink with a mask on. It is the large numbers of people in close proximity to one another that was disturbing. Also, some of our businesses are not enforcing the wearing of masks in their establishments. It is easy to say we live in a small town with only a few reported cases and we don’t need to be inconvenienced by having to follow state guidelines like the larger cities.

This is why we continue to see the spread of the virus.

Inconvenienced by wearing a mask? Uncomfortable? Can’t breathe as well? I saw real inconvenience first hand recently in one of our hospitals. Front-line workers are taking so many steps to keep patients safe. Wearing PPEs, using hand sanitizer before entering the room, after entering the room, before leaving the room and then outside the room, before continuing on to the next task. By not doing what we know helps prevent COVID-19, we are contributing to the spread of this virus.

Sisters has so many out-of-town and out-of-state visitors, we do not know where the virus may be lurking. Please, we all want to be able to return to a life that allows us to move about. Doing simple things to prevent more cases is essential.

Debbie Barnes

To the Editor:

I want to thank Commissioner Henderson for his August 12 letter to the editor stating that if the Deschutes National Forest needs more funding to reduce hazardous fuels he will advocate for it. The time for that advocacy is now, and yesterday.

In 2009 a group of environmentalists, timber industry representatives, fire fighters, the Forest Service, and other community partners secured \$10.1 million in a national competition to implement forest restoration and fuels reduction work across 257,000 acres of forest stretching from Black Butte Ranch to Sunriver, wrapping around the cities of Sisters and Bend. I was one of three authors for the proposal, so I am intimately familiar with the package of work that became the Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project.

Between 2009 and 2019, those \$10.1 million allowed the Deschutes National Forest to complete over 120,000 acres of thinning, mowing, and prescribed fire treatments. Some of those treated acres became key anchor points where fire fighters were able to stop the Pole Creek and Milli fires from advancing into Sisters area subdivisions. Those fires clearly demonstrated that fuels reduction work helps us contain fires, reduce their severity, and protect our homes. This restoration work also employed over 100 members of our community over that 10-year period.

The 10-year \$10.1 million award expired in 2019 and there are still 30,000 acres within the 257,000-acre landscape at high or extreme risk of wildfire. The Deschutes Collaborative and the Forest Service have sought an extension of their 10-year award and got a positive review from the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program advisory committee. Unfortunately, the advisory committee gave positive reviews to a total of \$70.3 million of projects nationally for 2021 and Congress has only appropriated \$40 million for the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program in recent years. Congress will need to be prodded to increase Appropriations for this program which could provide sorely needed wildfire protection, habitat improvement, and employment for our community.

Despite holding a seat on the Steering Committee of the Deschutes Collaborative, Commissioner Henderson does not appear to have listened well enough to understand the need to advocate for these appropriations to protect his constituents from wildfire. County Commissioners can have a lot of influence on forest management and funding when they know what to ask for. I ask for your vote and pledge to do better for our community and our forests.

Phil Chang

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