

The Nugget

News and Opinion
from Sisters, Oregon

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Sisters, OR
Permit No. 15

Vol. XLIV No. 48

www.NuggetNews.com

Wednesday, December 8, 2021

More water to flow in Whychus Creek

By Jim Cornelius
Editor in Chief

The Deschutes River Conservancy and Deschutes Land Trust have completed a water rights transfer that will help return more water to a local stream, providing a buffer for future drought years. They recently completed a transfer to move 40.2 acres of irrigation water rights (up to 0.59 cfs or 214 acre-feet) to instream use in Whychus Creek. This transfer will add over 69 million gallons of water to Whychus Creek from April to October. An acre-foot is the amount of water that

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Firebusters winner...

Sisters Elementary School celebrated their top honors in the Fire Busters program last week.

See related story, page 4.

PHOTO BY CHARLIE KANZIG

Winter closures protect deer habitat

By Bill Bartlett
Correspondent

Deer in Sisters are like those relatives who overstay their visit. They are charming and lovable for a few days and then — well, we’ve all been there. Deer are cute and endearing until they start demolishing our garden or dismantling tree bark. It’s been said that in Sisters

nobody owns their property — they just rent it from the deer.

Now it’s December and once again time for winter range closures that put limits on where we can travel by vehicle in the forest. We grouse about not being able to get onto our usual Forest Service roads, the ones to our

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Planners give green light to development

By Sue Stafford
Correspondent

With a unanimous vote of 6-0 in favor of approval with staff conditions, the Sisters Planning Commission gave a green light to the Sisters Woodlands Master Plan development, tentative subdivision, cottage development, and major

variance request, at their continued public hearing on December 2.

Public oral and written testimony had been closed at the conclusion of the previous hearing on November 10. The continuance was issued to provide additional time for the

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Black Butte Ranch Lodge comes down

By Katy Yoder
Correspondent

Black Butte Ranch (BBR) is bidding adieu to its original lodge, built over 50 years ago. After several renovations it was clear it was time to start over and create a space and experience only possible by removing the original structure. The decision wasn’t an easy one. For those who grew up coming to the Ranch or who call it home, imagining the drive in without the iconic building is hard to comprehend. The family dinners, morning coffees and weddings enjoyed in and around the building will have to live on in memory alone.

Shawn McCance, the CFO and interim CEO for the Ranch, has been a part of the Lodge project for many years. McCance took the helm when the former general manager, Jay Head, left for a new position three months ago. While a BBR hiring subcommittee interviews six candidates for Head’s job, McCance is moving the reconstruction forward and navigating the



PHOTO BY KATY YODER

The Lodge at Black Butte Ranch is being demolished to make room for a new, \$19.5 million facility.

many challenges of a project of this magnitude. As often happens with construction projects of this size and scope, a delay pushed back the original start date for demolition of the Lodge.

“In a nutshell, the project was more expensive than originally estimated,” said McCance. Inflation and supply-chain problems have made it hard to get construction materials.

“In Central Oregon that

was exacerbated due to a lack of employees,” said McCance.

But hurdles weren’t going to halt progress for long.

“The homeowners rallied around the project and came back and said not only do we want the project but we’re willing to spend more money for it. It came back with a 71-percent yes vote. So here we are today,”

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