

Weaver requests wood fuel use

If Jim Weaver has his way, Oregon slash timber once burned as waste will be turned into alcohol fuel to be used in combustion engines.

Weaver, the representative from Oregon's fourth congressional district, told an audience of nearly 40 people Tuesday afternoon that a bill he is about to introduce in the House will give the state's lumber companies the option of turning the waste wood products into usable fuel.

"Two weeks ago I introduced a bill that would require the oil companies to add 10 percent alcohol to every gallon of gasoline they refined," Weaver said during a town meeting in Springfield.

"Now, since I'm the chairman of the Forestry committee, I plan to push through a bill in the next two weeks that will make it possible to turn the wood waste that is burned in the field into useful alcohol that could be used in automobiles," he continued.

The combination of the fuels could be used in most combustion engines, he said. By burning the slash wood, the plan could also put to use a great deal of timber that has been wasted in the past.

Even though Oregon is known for its geothermal energy, Weaver also pointed out several problems involved with its production.

"There are really three problems with using geothermal energy," he said.

By KEVIN HARDEN
Of the Emerald

"Many of the leases to the land over the steam are locked up by some of the big oil companies. Management of the land is somewhat behind. And most of the operators who have put in for development of the energy don't seem to be in any big hurry to do anything with it."

A federal government plan to turn geothermal energy into electricity at Raft River, Idaho which was supposed to be completed two years ago is now two years behind schedule, he said.

"I think using woodwastes will be the best way

to go," Weaver explained, "because we have so much of it to use."

Fielding questions for nearly four hours, Weaver also explained his support for a recently introduced bill that would give Congress more control over the Postal Service. The bill, HB-7700, was introduced several weeks ago and requires Congress to vote on postal rate increases and local post office closures.

The McKenzie Bridge post office, which was closed three years ago by former Pres. Gerald Ford, may be reopened under the new bill, Weaver said.

"When this bill passes, I'm going to go to the Postmaster General and try my hardest to have that post office reopened," he told a representative of the McKenzie River residents who have tried for two years to reopen the station.

Weaver also said he would not support an amendment to the post office bill that would increase rates for parcel post mailing. "I don't believe we should increase any postal rates again," he said.



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Soviets building railroad in resource-rich Siberia

URGAL, U.S.S.R. (AP) — The Soviet Union is building a 2,000-mile railroad across seven mountain ranges and vast stretches of permafrost in northern Siberia that in the next few years will open up one of the regions in natural resources.

Into an area plagued by earthquakes and mudslides, where the winters can last almost nine months with temperatures dropping to 76 degrees below zero, the Soviets are pouring tens of thousands of workers and billions of dollars.

The Soviets call it "the project of the century" the Baik-al-Amur Mainline. It will run north of the Trans-Siberian Railroad which was completed at the turn of the cen-

tury by the Russian czars.

A Russian dream that goes back to the last century, the project to open up Siberia's mineral wealth was launched formally in 1974 and is now targeted to go into full operation in 1985.

The project's coordinator, Konstantin Mokhortov, said 683 miles of track had been laid as of last month, about one-third of the planned 2,200 miles.

Speaking to the first group of Western correspondents to visit the eastern sector of the project, Mokhortov said 100,000 persons are at work on the railroad. A large proportion of them are young people attracted by the highly publicized project to build communism, and many are military

construction workers. There is no evidence of the forced labor that was widely employed in the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railroad.

At Urgal, a three-hour drive over a bulldozed road from the nearest town and less than 200 miles from the Chinese border, a contingent of workers is building what will be the major station along the line's eastern sector. Most structures are made of wood and the roadways are packed snow. But the young town already has a school, a library, and sports and cultural facilities.

The railroad's planners are making life along the rail line as attractive as they can with pay incentives and unusually good provisions of food and other products to make its builders stay.

In addition to tapping Siberia's rich resources, it is a project to settle the Siberian Far East at a time when the Kremlin is sensitive to threats from neighboring China.

The pay incentives range up to 200 per cent of basic wages in other parts of the country. One Urgal official said the average wage here is about \$500 a month compared to about \$290 a month for comparable work in the Ukraine, where most Urgal workers come from.

Mokhortov said by the time the railroad is completed about 400 million tons of earth will have been moved, seven mountain ranges crossed and 4,000 structures built, including more than 140 bridges, 200 stations of varying size and more than 19 miles of tunnels.

He said about 300 miles more track will be completed this year and all track laid by 1983. Urgal officials said the track is costing about \$2.3 million per mile.

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