

Letters

Un-wilderness

Oregonians have been consumed by the urgent need to preserve the last strands of ancient forests for months now. At times, it may seem that all other environmental issues have been eclipsed by this problem. Not so.

Right-wing senators in Washington such as James McClure are working to dismantle the National Wilderness Preservation System, which was established in 1964. This law provides the legal basis for protecting all existing wilderness areas across the nation, such as French Pete, Three Sisters and others.

Miners and loggers, long hostile to this law which protects areas from all but foot and horse traffic, have been increasing their efforts to open wilderness areas to logging, motorized vehicle play and dam building.

Right now, Senate Bill 371, the Idaho un-wilderness bill, is before the U.S. Senate. The bill would begin the process of dismantling the national wilderness system by allowing the Secretary of Agriculture to disqualify roadless areas from the system if a jeep could possibly pass through them.

Existing wilderness areas could be deleted this way as well. Further, the bill would allow dam building in wilderness areas, and would allow developers to pump dry lakes and streams in wilderness areas.

We urgently need to oppose this bill now, or soon we will lose protection for the tiny amount of land protected as wilderness. Once safeguarded, we can work to include new areas in the Siskiyou and Opal Creek in the wilderness system.

Tom Ribe
Environmental Systems

Property

Come on, Steven Brence (ODE, Oct. 25). Say what's really on your mind.

You're angry that Sacred Heart owns property in the Eugene area, specifically in the

West University area, and that this ownership allows them to do what they choose with their land.

Hospitals provide medical service, and regardless of whether you believe in objective, perceivable reality or not, hospitals must occupy space.

Sacred Heart could have bought land out in Veneta to build their structure, but then they would have to bus everyone who parked there into town, so it's much more rational to build it on property which is right next door, and, coincidentally, that they already own.

Why build at all? Because they need the parking spaces. Most of the street spaces on their side of campus, plus the lots there, are filled with their employees' and patients' cars.

Sacred Heart's values are based on a very old system — altruism. If it weren't, they wouldn't offer so many free services. Doesn't this satisfy your cannibalistic urges for self-sacrifice?

You, of all people, should know that one's actions indicate one's values, indicate one's philosophy. I think that you've shown us a glimpse of yours.

Hmm ... politics: socialist, or, if you advocate private ownership, fascist. Ethics: altruist but not logic-based, perhaps social learning. Metaphysics: at least two realities. Basically, some form of neo-Kantian-Hegelian collectivism. How close did I get?

Chris Ramko
Student

Compromise

Your Oct. 16 editorial, "Let groundbreaking on park begin soon" indicated that part of the proposed location for the Riverfront Research Park, between the Willamette River and the railroad tracks "... has long been a sore spot with citizens concerned about the site's ecology and recreational use history."

For the University administration and student body, the riverfront site has definitely

caused a long, bitter dispute.

The University administration has repeatedly dismissed or ignored student's efforts to protect the site for recreation and wildlife habitat. Only last spring, for example, the student body voted by an 80 percent majority to protect the site as a "campus greenway area," yet the administration responded by contacting a developer to develop the site.

Despite students' and faculty's numerous requests, the administration has not even considered scaling down the development between the railroad tracks and Franklin Boulevard. Scaling down the project would protect the "campus greenway area" as well as allow enough space for a successful research park.

University students use the riverfront for a variety of recreational activities: from playing team sports to walking along the river and enjoying the wildlife. The site is essential to meeting the University's recreational and open-space needs.

Now, with a new University president, it is possible that the students and administration can work together to establish a "campus greenway area." Such a compromise would enable the University to explore recreational opportunities on the riverfront as we develop the Research Park.

Dan Stotter
Law

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