

Sacrifice today for river's tomorrow

Good news folks. It looks as if Lane County voters may be bucking the American political norm by considering issues today that will affect their future.

An initiative designed to protect the banks of the McKenzie River has received enough signatures to gain a place on the May 19 primary election ballot.

The McKenzie River Scenic Area Initiative would restrict bridge building, pesticide use, boat dock construction, dam operations and mining along the river.

Considering the McKenzie is the drinking water source for Eugene and surrounding areas, this is a great idea. Among various tactics, the measure would protect water quality via county rural land use plan amendments.

It's also a winner because it would guard one of Oregon's most prized rivers from the environmental degradation plaguing darn near every square inch of land, water and air in this country.

The catch? The measure would include restrictions on property owners dictating how much vegetation they could remove and where they could build fences, park their cars and set up satellite dishes.

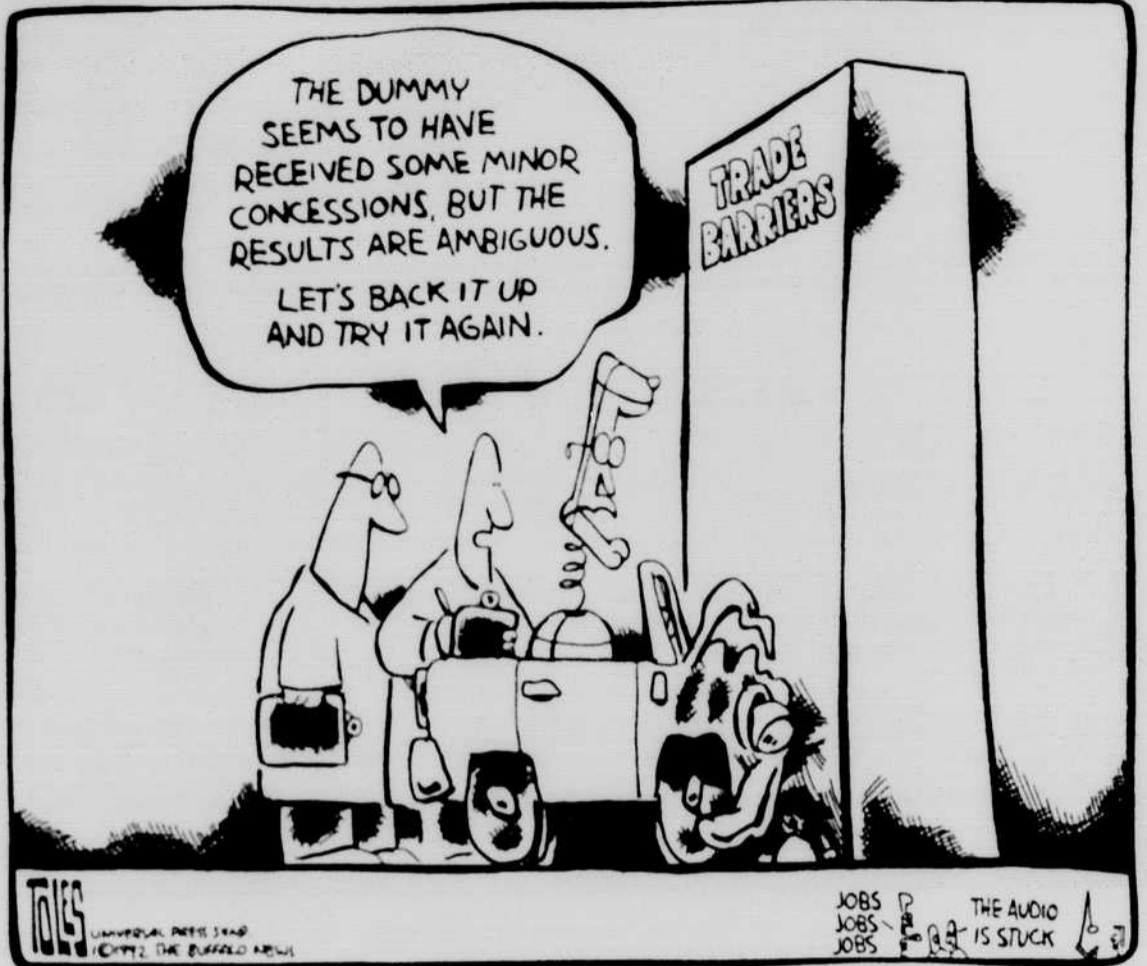
No doubt these folks will have a justifiable bone to pick with measure supporters. Who wants to be told what they can and can't do on *their* land?

Unfortunately, these landowners need to bite the bullet and abide by the restrictions; the position of their land sets them up for this unpleasant reality.

It's a fact that nearly every river in this state, let alone the country, not bordered by at least 70 degree-angled slopes has been engulfed by human "progress." It's this progress that is most responsible for the degeneration of the natural environment, both along the McKenzie and beyond.

It's great to see the foresight of those who wrote and now support this measure. Building and development along the McKenzie needs to be stopped now for the river's survival.

Residents along the river will have to make sacrifices should the measure pass, but even they shouldn't mind too much. After all, it's the river they love that will be protected through those sacrifices.



Bears, owls get one-gun salute



THE FINE PRINT

BY RENE DECAIR

The killing of a bear last Friday once again shows how people find it much easier to look down the barrel of a gun than to look for solutions.

A 300-pound black bear pregnant with two cubs was shot outside of Coburg by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife officials because, as officials said, she was becoming a nuisance.

This same bear was relocated by wildlife officials last summer after she was caught eating garbage at a summer church camp. Fish and Wildlife policy allows for relocating animals only once.

The bear had not harmed any humans, nor had she killed any livestock, but her presence was perceived as a potential threat, so they shot her as she took cover in a thicket of briars.

Americans like neat and tidy ends to problems. When "things" living or otherwise, start to become a problem, we eliminate them.

The only life we seem to value is human life, and that is even questionable as we continue to kill each other.

Couldn't the bear have been relocated again? "No," officials say. "That's not policy."

And, more importantly they say, bears are highly intelligent. She was developing a pattern of coming into town to look for food.

She was becoming less afraid of people. So they gave her a reason to be afraid. Yep, sounds rational to me.

"They're more adaptable to people than people are adaptable to them," one wildlife official said. His office received about 100 complaint calls last year concerning black bears.

But 99 percent of the time, he said, they are "nuisance complaints" from people who discover the bears eating their pet's food or getting into their garbage.

It's amazing how fear of the unknown can move people to action.

Officials claim that the recent killing was necessary because it could have changed from a "nuisance situation to a hazardous one," a wildlife official said.

The officials turned their own fear into what essentially comes down to an act of murder.

Five other bears have been killed under similar circumstances since last spring — four by citizens and one by officials. These actions show a blatant disregard for wildlife, and are unfortunately not isolated incidents.

We're all familiar with the spotted owl controversy, and regardless of how people feel about the issues surrounding it, it is sickening to think people

would shoot an endangered species, as several people did two years ago, apparently in protest over decisions made to protect the bird.

And, of course, there are the bumper stickers many people so proudly put on their cars and trucks that say, "I like spotted owls — fried."

I find it hard to understand how otherwise rational people can turn their fear (fear of perhaps losing their jobs, in the case of the owl, or an unfounded fear of danger, in the case of the bears) and turn that into violence against an innocent animal.

I thought humans were supposed to be smarter than other animals.

We're not putting our superior intelligence to use when we fall prey to our own fears and cease to look for alternative ways to deal with our problems.

What will we tell our kids when all the bears, owls, whales, apes, rhinos and all the other beautiful animals can be found only in zoos, if at all?

To teach kids the alphabet, teachers now say, "'A' is for apple, 'B' is for bear" and so on. I offer a few alternatives for the future. "'A' is for apple, 'B' is for butchered, 'C' is for caged, 'D' is for dead and 'X' is for x-tinction."

Rene DeCair is the Emerald's community associate editor.

Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. BOX 3159, EUGENE, OREGON 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co. Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

The Emerald is private property. The unlawful removal or use of papers is prosecutable by law.

Managing Editor	Pat Malach	News Editor	Chris Bourneff
Editorial Editor	Cathie Daniels	Editorial Editor	Don Peters
Graphics Editor	Jeff Passlay	Sports Editor	Jake Berg
Entertainment Editor	Layne Lakelish	Night Editor	Christopher Blair

Associate Editors
Student Government/Activities: Daralyn Trappe
Higher Education/Administration: Carrie Dennett

Reporters: Tammy Batey, David Charbonneau, Karen Engels, Jayson Jacoby, Gerrit Koepfing, Kirsten Lucas, Hope Neilson, Colleen Pohlig, Jim Winkle

Copy Editors: Christopher Chew, Dan Eisler, Karen Engels, Fred Hagen, Paul Halvorson, Sheila Mitha, Kathy Sherlock, Kathy Sweeney

Photographers: Sean Poston, Andre Ranieri

Advertising: Joan Bradley, Scott Dana, Leslie Fial, David Gauntlett, Margy Grassmyer, Brian Kilburn, Tom Leach, Randon Riley, Catherine Royle, Dustin Stadel, Tara Surratt, Vicki Tobin, Sharon Vaz

Classified: Peggy McGinn, **Manager:** Kevin Austerman, Alan Curtis, Sheila Lorenzo

Business: Kathy Carbone, **Supervisor:** Judy Connolly

Production: Ingrid White, **Production Coordinator:** Sarah Clark, Jim Finch, Corine Frier, Kristina Granger, Jennifer Huey, Dee McCobb, Stacy Mitchell, Matt Morin, Jennifer Roland, Jennifer Smith, Anne Stephenson, Jennifer Viale, Todd Williams

General Manager: Judy Riold

Advertising Director: Bryan R. Coppedge
Newsroom: 346-5511
Business Office: 346-5512

Production Manager: Michele Ross
Display Advertising: 346-3712
Classified Advertising: 346-4343

