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In my opinion

Political CLEAR-CUTTING



CHUCK SLOTHOWER
TAKING ISSUE

How much is the Willamette National Forest worth to you? The question has gained importance recently because the U.S. Forest Service has begun designating recreation sites such as campgrounds and trailheads for closure, and President Bush is betting you won't care much.

The move should strike a nerve in Oregon, home to thousands of campers, hikers and nature lovers. Many of Oregon's greatest treasures, including Mt. Hood and the Eagle Cap Wilderness Area, reside in land owned by the Forest Service.

Under Bush's plan, forest managers must rate their recreation sites by cost, popularity and what type of recreation they provide, according to The Oregonian. Some sites that score low will probably be closed because of inadequate funding.

Of course, sites run by commercial contractors will not be affected. That would be anti-business.

Bush doesn't much like public lands. How else to explain his 2006 budget proposal, which calls for a 46 percent drop in maintenance funding for Forest Service facilities? If the Forest Service can't afford to maintain its facilities, it will close them.

The review smacks of other Bush administration initiatives, the most telling of those being the No Child Left Behind Act. Like the landmark education reform, the Forest Service review seeks to quantify the unquantifiable. Just as Bush thinks scores on a standardized test indicate the

measure of learning, he thinks the value of a place like Mount Hood can be discerned by tallying its visitors and fiscal-year income. Under Bush's plan, computers will by 2007 decide the value of Forest Service recreation sites.

Throughout his administration, Bush has assaulted some of government's greatest accomplishments because of an ideological preference for private institutions. No Child Left Behind, for example, shifts funds from public to private schools. His Social Security reform proposal seeks to take money from government accounts to create private accounts. Corporate contractors have come to do everything from fighting wildfires to feeding troops, a process dramatically accelerated under Bush.

Now the same ideology has resulted in not just neglect of public lands but an open attack on their merit. Some fear this will eventually result in privatization, with outdoor recreation offered by places such as the Six Flags Willamette National Forest.

Perhaps such speculation borders on hysteresis, but keep this in mind: When

our parents were kids, they didn't have to pay to walk in the forest. We have trail fees. Also, the Forest Service has put up for sale public property such as housing for rangers, probably to be transformed into cabins for those who can afford them.

Bush's plan also includes uncomfortable echoes of corporate marketing practices. Forest Service managers must choose a "recreation niche" that attracts the public and evaluate how well their sites reflect that theme. At Mount Hood, for example, sites that relate to skiing would likely take priority. Others could see cuts. The directive isn't unlike a CEO telling his company's marketing department to focus on a specific product. It might work for Nike, but corporate values don't fit national forests.

Bush's plan stems in part from an inability to see the value of public land. While many Oregonians grow up camping and hiking in national forests, Bush comes from a culture where public lands are scarce. His home state of Texas has four national forests, which total 636,872 acres, or 0.37 percent of the state.

Oregon, in contrast, has 13 national forests that total about 18 million acres, or almost 30 percent of the state.

But don't feel bad. Texas also has 219 Wal-Mart Supercenters and a really big Army base.

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INBOX

'Insiders' bring needed experience to ASUO

It seems our campus has recently confronted a phobia regarding ASUO "insiders." Adam and Kyla have utilized Ashley and Jael's involvement in the ASUO as their main campaigning tactic against their opponents. However, the truth is that the ASUO yields powerful legislative and political experience for students who are passionate about politics. Does our campus want to put somebody in power without legislative understanding or a clear conception of student government?

Prior to this election, Ashley and Jael worked with multiple student groups on campus, fought for the elimination of unnecessary scheduling fees, and worked toward other major positive achievements for the University. It's time to stop pre-judging candidates as being "insiders" before thoroughly evaluating their actual platforms and job experience. If this election were anything like an election out in the real world, Ashley and Jael would be the only candidates claiming enough experience to even be in the running.

When students examine the candidates, I hope they consider the gravity of this election, and the knowledge, experience, and understanding that only Ashley and Jael can bring to this campus.

Megan Sparks
Junior

Walsh and Coy breathe fresh life into incidental fee

There is a need for a breath of fresh air in the ASUO. A new vision and direction is needed in order to incorporate all facets of student life while dramatically improving the lives of the associated students.

We must not be content with the status quo. It is necessary to have new leaders venture forth into new regions and uncharted territories so that everyone can feel as if their pocketbooks and best interests are safe-guarded and kept in mind.

Adam Walsh and Kyla Coy offer a breath of fresh air to student government. They will fight for students' rights while ensuring that all students are fully represented. Their platform speaks for itself: improved interaction and communication between the University and the City of Eugene, fiscal responsibility with the incidental fee and roll-over meal points for students who live in the residence halls.

We believe it is important that students' voices are heard by their student government. We must have the student government represent all students, be a place where all students want to go to, rather than avoid.

Adam and Kyla want to reform the incidental fee process, which is in great need of reform. They have the know-how and understanding of

needs to be done. A vote for Walsh and Coy will be a vote for fiscal responsibility with the incidental fee. A vote for Walsh and Coy will be a vote for fairness across the board.

Nick Hudson, Jacob Daniels
and David Goward
Eugene

Rees-Anker-Lagos fight for housing education

Students face a choice this election between being led to achieve what is possible or being told what is not possible.

When led by people who dedicate themselves to making it work for students, the ASUO can be a powerful voice for your interests. This year alone, students registered 7,500 voters and convinced the administration to eliminate the "sketchy scheduling penalty," which previously forced students to pay money for classes they dropped before even attending.

When the ASUO was leading the citywide coalition to win housing standards, Ashley Rees and Jael Anker-Lagos were there, representing students. Adam Walsh was not. When students lobby the legislature to make education affordable, Ashley and Jael are there. Adam Walsh is not.

We want student leaders who work to give students every possible advantage as they continue their education and their lives. Ashley and Jael are those leaders. Their opponents are not.

Louis William Guptill
Senior

Out loud

"Bullshit!" — "Larry the Lightbulb," campaign mascot for the Ashley Rees-Jael Anker-Lagos ticket, to candidate Adam Walsh during an informal debate in the EMU Amphitheater on Thursday. The yellow mascot's profanity interrupted the discussion twice.

"It seems ironic that the name would be 'Public Safety' if we're really putting students in jeopardy." — ASUO Executive candidate Adam Walsh on Wednesday, about his wish to alter the current Department of Public Safety policy to cite underage students experiencing alcohol poisoning with a violation charge of minor in possession.

"There is this bridge that we've built with the community. ... It's unfortunate that Adam doesn't see this bridge because he's never actually walked on it and participated in the housing standards. He was not at the hearings." — ASUO Executive candidate Jael Anker-Lagos on Wednesday, about the issue of ASUO experience and campus-community relations.

"(A tuition freeze) will be hard to get, but it's something that students want and something we'd continue to advocate for as long as it doesn't affect the Oregon Opportunity Grant. The reality of it is that any ASUO Executive candidate who tells you they're going to get the tuition freeze for you is lying to you." — ASUO Executive candidate Adam Walsh on Wednesday.

"Our take on it is that the most important thing in an election and for the ASUO in general is having contact with students. Facebook's fun; I like Facebook, but for campaigning we want to make sure we're actually building a bridge with students and communicating with students." — ASUO Executive candidate Ashley Rees on Thursday, about the use of Thefacebook.com as a campaigning tool.

"My deliberate silence echoes that silence, which is caused by harassment, prejudice, and discrimination." — A flier handed out by students participating in Wednesday's Day of Silence, a Gay, Lesbian and Straight Network project.

"Every decade since the second world war has been marked by U.S. intervention in other countries." — Feminist, author, and educator Dr. M. Jacqui Alexander at her Wednesday talk entitled "Not Just Anybody Can Be a Patriot: The Militarized State of the Empire."

"I think it's very perverse. It surprises me that students in higher education go and model for these things." — Junior Mari Mizobe on Tuesday about the presence of Playboy auditions on campus.

"Who wouldn't want to be in Playboy?" — Drew, a university senior, on her decision to try out for Playboy's "Girls of the Pac-10."

"The abuse of Adderall ... seems to be an increasing problem." — Eugene Police Department spokeswoman Kerry Delf responding Tuesday to the arrest of a prescription drug dealer in the University's residence halls.

"If somebody drops a class because they don't like that teacher, they're not filling out an evaluation form." — Senior Aaron Woods on Monday, discussing a statistical error of course evaluations.

— From Daily Emerald news reports

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