

GUEST EDITORIAL

Marijuana production, distribution, consumption out of control

Billy J. Williams, U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon, provided the below statement on Aug. 2 on the release of the Oregon-Idaho High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) 2018 Marijuana Insight Report.

The recent HIDTA Insight Report on marijuana production, distribution and consumption in Oregon confirms what we already know — it is out of control. The industry's considerable and negative impacts on land use, water and underage consumption must be addressed immediately. State officials should respond quickly and in a comprehensive manner to address the many concerns raised by this assessment.

To date, we've seen insufficient progress from our state officials. We are alarmed by revelations from industry representatives, landowners and law enforcement partners describing the insufficient and underfunded regulatory and enforcement structure governing both recreational and medical use. A weakly regulated industry will continue to detract from the livability and health of communities throughout the state.

What is often lost in this discussion is the link between marijuana and serious, interstate criminal activity. Overproduction is rampant and the illegal transport of product out of state — a violation of both state and federal law — continues unchecked. My task continues to be for transparency, responsible regulation, adequate funding and a willingness to work together. It's time for the state to wake up, slow down and address these issues in a responsible and thoughtful manner.

CONTACT YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

State Rep. Greg Barreto (58th District/Cove): Salem office: 900 Court St. NE., H-384, Salem, OR 97301; 503-986-1458. Website: www.oregonlegislature.gov/barreto. Email: rep.gregbarreto@oregonlegislature.gov.

State Rep. Greg Smith (57th District): Salem office: 900 Court St. NE., H-482, Salem, OR, 97301; 503-986-1457. Heppner office: P.O. Box 219, Heppner, OR 97836; 541-676-5154; Website: www.oregonlegislature.gov/smithg. Email: rep.gregsmith@oregonlegislature.gov.

Oregon Legislature: Legislative documents and information are available online at www.leg.state.or.us.

City of La Grande: Mayor Steve Clements, City Manager Robert Strope; P.O. Box 670, La Grande, OR 97850; 541-962-1309; fax 541-963-3333.

Union County Commissioners: Donna Beverage, Steve McClure and Jack Howard; 1106 K Ave., La Grande, OR 97850; 541-963-1001; fax 541-963-1079.

Wallowa County Commissioners: Paul Castilleja, Todd Nash and Susan Roberts; 101 S. River St., Room 202, Enterprise, OR 97828; 541-426-4543, ext. 11; fax 541-426-0582.

Elgin City Councilors: Mayor Allan Duffy, 501 N 11th St., 541-437-1016, mayor@cityofelginor.org; Mary West, 260 N 5th Ave., 541-805-0443, councilor3@cityofelginor.org; Kathy Warren, PO Box 697, 541-786-9611, councilor6@cityofelginor.org; Councilor Teresa Hylton-Shaffer, 540 N. 10th Ave., 541-663-6666, councilor5@cityofelginor.org; Risa Halgarth, PO Box 525, 541-437-9462, councilor2@cityofelginor.org; Rocky Burgess, 800 N 14th St., P.O. Box 854, 541-786-2417, councilor1@cityofelginor.org; David Reed, 1011 Detroit St., PO Box 368; 541-975-3306, councilor4@cityofelginor.org; Ryan Martin

Enterprise City Councilors: Mayor Stacey Karvoski, mayorofenterprise@gmail.com; Jenni Word; Dave Elliott; Ashley Sullivan; Micah Agnew; Larry Christman; Chris Pritchard; 541-426-4196; mail to City of Enterprise, 108 N.E. 1st Street, Enterprise, OR 97828

Imbler City Councilors: Mayor Mike McLean, Corrine Wilfong, Herman Ortmann, Mark Howell, Rick Vicek, Joan Harding, Jason Berglund; 180 Ruckman Ave.; P.O. Box 40, Imbler OR 97841; 541-534-6095

Joseph City Councilors: Mayor Dennis Sands; Pearl Sturm; Teresa Sajonia; Tom Clevenger; Kathy Bingham; George Ballard; 541-432-3832; P.O. Box 15, Joseph, Oregon 97846; 201 North Main St.; cityofjosephoregon@gmail.com

La Grande City Councilors: Mayor Steve Clements, Gary Lillard, Nicole Howard, Corrine Dutto, Mary Ann Miesner, Troy Pointer, Justin Rock; through the City Manager's office, 541-962-1309

Union City Councilors: Mayor Leonard Flint, LeonardFlint@cityofunion.com; John Farmer, johnfarmer@cityofunion.com; Randy Knop, councilorknop@cityofunion.com; Sue Hawkins, susanhawkins@cityofunion.com; Matt Later, mattlater@cityofunion.com; Jay Blackburn, jayblackburn@cityofunion.com; Walt Brookshire, waltbrookshire@cityofunion.com



Earning his wings. Again.

Your views

Garlitz: Smoke — what a bargain

To the Editor:
We were told that we must save the spotted owl habitat; save the salmon river tributaries; end spraying for pine bark beetle and tussock moth infestations; stop timber resources harvests by endless lawsuits, letting judges set the timber resource harvests.

And what did we get in return?
Fires that destroy spotted owl habitat by the tens of thousands of acres; fires that denude tens of thousands of acres of salmon tributary watersheds; fires that destroy hundreds of millions of dollars of public and private properties; months on end of smoke-drenched skies many times worse than the days of heavy agricultural burning, smoke that blankets thousands of square miles; untold human and animal health problems caused by breathing micro-aerosol particulates; hundreds of millions of dollars of public resources spent attempting to control uncontrollable fires; loss of millions of dollars in timber sales that provide resources to properly tend timberlands; and finally, devastated economies for many if not most timber-resource-based communities.

Man oh man, what a wonderful deal we have been dealt.

Joe Garlitz
Elgin

Zebrak: Walden's vote for Wall Street over Main Street is a vote against me and you

To the Editor:
Like many of my Baker City friends and neighbors, I own my own business. I

rely on an open internet so my customers can easily access and navigate my website. I am disgusted that Greg Walden voted to end net neutrality.

Net neutrality creates a level playing field by requiring Internet Service Providers to transmit all data at equal speeds. Without net neutrality, ISPs could adjust website delivery speeds to favor large companies who can pay more for service.

Walden's vote against continuing net neutrality will allow large cable and phone companies to make big profits by dividing content into so-called "fast lanes" and "slow lanes" and charging consumers or content providers extra fees to break out of the slow lanes. It's not surprising that Walden gets huge donations from telecommunications companies. Walden's vote for Wall Street over Main Street is a vote against me and you.

Like many of you, I have kids in my life. In my case it's curious young grandkids who use the internet for research and learning. The very best thing about the internet has been equal access to information and knowledge. Walden's vote against net neutrality means that online research, streaming educational videos and distance learning will be more difficult and expensive.

Like many of you, I support a level playing field for all businesses and seekers of knowledge and information. Come November my vote for District 2 Representative will go to Jamie McLeod-Skinner, who knows that a free and open internet will promote innovation, protect free speech, enable equitable access to information and help prevent unfair pricing

Write to us

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Observer welcomes letters to the editor. Letters are limited to 350 words and must be signed and carry the author's address and phone number (for verification purposes only). We edit letters for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons. We do not fact check. We will not publish poetry, consumer complaints against businesses or personal attacks against private individuals. Thank you letters are discouraged. Letter writers are limited to one letter every two weeks. Email your letters to news@lagrandeobserver.com or mail them to La Grande Observer, 1406 5th St., La Grande, Ore., 97850.

MY VOICE

My Voice columns should be 500 words. Submissions should include a portrait-type photograph of the author. Authors also should include their full name, age, occupation and relevant organizational memberships. We edit submissions for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons. We do not fact check. We reject those published elsewhere. Send columns to La Grande Observer, 1406 5th St., La Grande, Ore., 97850, fax them to 541-963-7804 or email them to news@lagrandeobserver.com.

practices.

I hope that you will be like me and vote for Jamie McLeod-Skinner.

Jeanie Zebrak
Baker City

Journet: Failing to address global warming would lead to catastrophe

To the Editor:
It's astonishing how humans can deny the obvious. We thought once serious regional disasters occurred that clearly implicated global warming, Americans and our leaders would respond. Think again.

Here we are, confronted by dwindling snowpack, advancing spring snowmelt and suffocating heat-stimulating wildfires and hazardous health conditions, and still there are those like Trump and his cult who blame something or someone else, deny the science and recom-

mend logging the forest to protect it. Here we are with decades of fire suppression having transformed our forests, and still we have folks urging yet more fire suppression rather than sane forest management that would allow us to manage the inevitable and essential forest fires.

We face a catastrophe of immense proportions if we fail to address global warming; we are just seeing a small harbinger of our future. Global biodiversity along with our agriculture, our forestry and our fisheries are at risk.

For our children's sake we should reject this ridiculous denial and work together to solve the problem of climate pollution before it's too late — if we are not too late already.

Alan Journet
Co-facilitator, Southern Oregon Climate Action Now
Jacksonville

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

SUBSCRIBE AND SAVE

NEWSSTAND PRICE: \$1.00
You can save up to 34% off the single-copy price with home delivery.
Call 541-963-3161 to subscribe.

Stopped account balances less than \$5 will be refunded upon request.

Subscription rates per month:
By carrier.....\$10.50
By mail, all other U.S.....\$15



A division of
Western Communications Inc.

THE OBSERVER

An independent newspaper founded in 1896

(USPS 299-260)

The Observer reserves the right to adjust subscription rates by giving prepaid and mail subscribers 30 days notice. Periodicals postage paid at La Grande, Oregon 97850. Published Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays (except Dec. 25) by Western Communications Inc., 1406 Fifth St., La Grande, OR 97850 (USPS 299-260)

COPYRIGHT © 2018 THE OBSERVER
The Observer retains ownership and copyright protection of all staff-prepared news copy, advertising copy, photos and news or ad illustrations. They may not be reproduced without explicit prior approval.

Phone:
541-963-3161

Toll free (Oregon):
1-800-422-3110
Fax: 541-963-7804

Email:
news@lagrandeobserver.com
Website:
www.lagrandeobserver.com
Street address:
1406 Fifth St., La Grande

POSTMASTER
Send address changes to:
The Observer, 1406 Fifth St.,
La Grande, OR 97850
Periodicals postage paid at:
La Grande, Oregon 97850

STAFF

Regional publisher.....Karrine Brogotti	Home delivery advisor.....Amanda Fredrick
General manager/ Regional operations manager..... Frank Everidge	Customer service rep.....Mollie Lynch
Regional audience development director.....Kelli Craft	Advertising representative.....Karen Fye
Editor.....Cherise Kaechele	Advertising representative.....Juli Bloodgood
News clerk.....Lisa Lester Kelly	Advertising representative.....Amy Horn
Sports editor.....Ronald Bond	Graphic design supervisor.....Dorothy Kautz
Reporter.....Dick Mason	Graphic design.....Cheryl Christian
Reporter.....Audrey Love	Lead pressman.....Chris Dunn
Reporter.....Max Denning	Pressman.....Jay Magnuson
Classifieds.....Devi Mathson	Distribution center supervisor.....Larra Cutler
Customer service rep.....Sharon Magnuson	Distribution center.....Terry Everidge
	Distribution center.....Sally Neaves