

TRAIL

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would pay for and construct the B2H line, which would extend from Boardman to the Hemingway substation near Melba, Idaho.

Williams said the proposed plan calls for the transmission line and its poles to be 125 feet outside the Oregon Trail on either side, but fears this is close enough to pose a threat to the historical remnants because of the heavy equipment that would have to be brought in to construct the massive transmission line. He said if the equipment ran over the ruts, it would cause irreparable damage.

Gail Carbiener of Bend, a member of the Oregon-California Trail Association, shares Williams' concern.

"(The proposed B2H line) can't help but have an impact," Carbiener said.

The Bend resident noted the equipment brought in would be enormous, with some items such as cranes weighing close to 100,000 pounds.

"It would be huge," he said.

More than ruts are at risk by the proposed B2H line. Williams said the proposed project's plan calls for a large tower to be built in the middle of an area that was a campsite for Oregon Trail pioneers. He said numerous artifacts have been found at the site with a metal detec-

tor within the past two years during searches he assisted. Items found include oxen shoes, a bracket for a wagon and many nails. Williams said nails are commonly found along the Oregon Trail.

"It has been called the trail of nails," he said.

The La Grande resident said he fears if a tower is placed at the campsite, the Oregon Trail artifacts buried underneath it may be lost forever.

The B2H transmission line poles would be over 100 feet high, Carbiener said. This would be much greater than the height of most power lines in the area and a great concern to Carbiener. He said such towering poles would detract from the setting of the Oregon Trail. He also said the presence of power lines of any size would be a detriment in some portions of the Oregon Trail.

Carbiener notes today there are still passages at and near the Blue Mountain Crossing Interpretive Center 16 miles west of La Grande where the Oregon Trail can be seen in a setting where there are no power lines, buildings or roads.

"You can walk there today and see exactly what the Oregon Trail pioneers saw," Carbiener said.

He said the B2H transmission line, if installed as proposed, would rob people of this opportunity in some areas.

"It would destroy view sheds," he said.

A statement sent to The Observer from Idaho Powder archaeologist Shane Baker said with regard to the Oregon Trail and B2H indicates that the company is sensitive to the concerns expressed by Williams, Carbiener, Paul and others.

"Idaho Power is very aware of the historic significance of the Oregon Trail, as well as other historic trails and resources in the area of the proposed project, and did everything reasonably possible to protect and consider the trail during the process of selecting a proposed route. We've spent time documenting where trail segments occur within the vicinity of the project and in planning how to avoid and protect the trail. We also met with landowners, stakeholders, including trail group representatives, to hear their concerns and solicit their input," the statement read.

Idaho Powder also noted in its statement that federal and state laws require it to take all historic resources into consideration during the planning and permitting process, and to protect them.

"There's a federal and state process that must be followed that protects historic and other natural resources," according to the statement. "Our intent is to minimize impacts to all resources. During design and construction, we would avoid placing



Cheisee Keechele / The Observer

Lanetta Paul, who brought tours to the property where the Oregon Trail ruts are, stands in one of the ruts made by the wagon wheels located on private property near Morgan Lake.

towers on any identified trail segments, or ruts, and site the project in a manner that reduces direct and indirect impacts. In some instances, mitigation may be an appropriate method to offset impacts."

Idaho Power officials noted the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center just outside Baker City and the Birch Creek area in Malheur County are examples where several steps were taken in its route proposal to protect the Oregon Trail. The company said it is committed to minimizing visual impacts by using lower tower designs that are more consistent with existing transmission towers.

The statement also said Idaho Power intends to do more to address the concerns about B2Hs proximity

to the Oregon Trail: "We plan to continue working with the community, landowners and trail group representatives to identify other potential mitigation ideas; such as public education and outreach by constructing and installing interpretive signs about the trail and its history."

Carbiener said the Oregon-California Trails Association is taking steps to protect the Oregon Trail, such as attempting to get all portions of the historical trail along the B2H route put on the National Register of Historic Places. The Oregon-California Trails Association is now preparing an application for this. Carbiener hopes this will help sway PacifiCorp, the Bonneville Power Admin-

istration and Idaho Power to alter the proposed B2H route so the Oregon Trail is not impacted.

"It may not legally keep them from following the B2H route now proposed," Carbiener said, "but it may discourage them."



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COUNCILOR

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Warner wrote in his email that the remaining six city councilors will discuss Thomas' resignation, and its ramifications, during their Tuesday meeting.

According to the city charter, the City Council appoints a replacement when a councilor resigns.

The appointed councilor serves the remainder of the departing councilor's term. Thomas' term expires Dec. 31, 2018.

The situation could potentially be complicated by the timing, with the Nov. 6 election a little more than two months away.

Four of the seven City Council seats, including the one Thomas previously held, are up for election Nov. 6.

Tuesday is the deadline for candidates to file for the election. As of this morning, four people have been certified as candidates — incumbent Randy Schiewe, along with Daryl DeMoss, Kevin Luckini and Lynette Perry.

Seven others have been authorized to collect the 40 signatures required to be a candidate — Randy Daugherty, who is a former councilor; Slade Elbert, Raymond Rienks, Doni Bruland, Michael Finney, Steve Howland and Carly Annable.

The potential complication has to do with the term limits clause in the city charter, which limits councilors to serving no more than two consecutive terms, including partial terms.

If the Council appointed as Thomas' replacement one of the candidates in the Nov. 6 election, and that person was subsequently elected, he or she would be able to serve only one term as an elected councilor, because the time serving the remainder of Thomas' term would count as one term, even though it would last for just four months or so.

The top three candidates in the Nov. 6 election will be elected to four-year terms.

The fourth-place finisher will serve a two-year term.

ABUSE

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the Department of Human Services will make sure the child is safe in the long term, Browne and Schlichting will ensure they are immediately safe from the accused.

McDaniel said the victims and their family go through a checklist of what happens if the accused confronts the family or the child. A safety plan is put in place and options are described about what to do. After that, the victim advocates, who are assigned separately to cases, keep the family in the loop about hearings.

"We make sure (the families) are as involved as much as they want to be," Schlichting said.

Browne said if victims choose to, they will speak for themselves in the hearings. They don't have to, and in those cases, Browne and Schlichting will speak for the victim.

Their job might seem to include a lot of time filling out paperwork, but in actuality, they are very active in their role as protectors of victims — they anticipate their needs and make sure they're OK.

"They spend a lot of time listening to people," McDaniel said. "They get yelled at a lot because people are frustrated and there's no other outlet to vent their frustration."

They are compassionate because that's what the job is all about.

The most important part of the job is

the relationship and trust they build over months of being with the victims.

"They become a part of (the victims') family," McDaniel said. "They cry with them. It's much more about helping them than it is about applications."

As an example, Browne and Schlichting provided support at Umpqua Community College after the shooting occurred in Roseburg in 2015. They were at the college for days, giving support to the survivors.

Neither of the Union County Victim Assistance advocates planned on getting into this field.

Schlichting, who has been in the position for 11 years, said she originally wanted to be in parole and probation but did her practicum at the Union County District Attorney's Office.

"I just never left," she said. "I didn't even know this position existed." Browne, who has been doing this for four and a half years, said she had been a restaurant manager and worked as a volunteer firefighter and EMT. The position came open at the DA's office and a friend of hers told her about it.

"I didn't know what it was," she said.

It worked for her because, with her firefighter and EMT experience, she is comfortable with trauma response.

"You have to have empathy for people," Schlichting said. "You have to be a strong person."

They're the rock in every really bad situation, McDaniel said.

Browne said they have to be good communicators on all levels. They have to speak to children as clearly as they do to the parents.

"You need patience," Schlichting added.

McDaniel asked the two of them to describe why the other is so good at their job.

Browne said Schlichting is organized and very good at being assertive and getting her point across.

Schlichting said Browne is patient and approachable.

"She's aware of people's emotions," Schlichting said. "She takes the time to listen to their wants and needs and prioritizes them to get it done."

Both admit the more they do the job, the better they are at being there for the victims. And doing it more efficiently.

Schlichting said since 2013, when Browne first came on board, there have been 91 cases of child sexual abuse. McDaniel said part of the reason for the increase is a higher number of mandatory reporters than there used to be.

Any child who is a victim of a crime in the

county won't be alone. "They're often silent in the background," McDaniel said of Schlichting and Brown, "but what they do is beyond measure."

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