

**GUEST EDITORIAL**

**FROM THE BEND BULLETIN**

## Don't delay scheduling a Congressional debate

Voters should be able to see a debate between Republican incumbent Greg Walden and Democratic challenger Jamie McLeod-Skinner in the race for the Second Congressional District seat.

Walden's campaign told us there should be a debate. McLeod-Skinner said her campaign has tried to set something up but has been stonewalled by Walden's campaign.

When we contacted Walden's campaign about this issue last week, we were told they were going to work on it and needed to find something that fit into Walden's schedule. A week has gone by.

Crickets.

Walden needs to make setting up a debate a priority for his campaign. Voters deserve an opportunity to see how the candidates compare head-to-head.

## Your views

### Cruson: Walden understands culture of Eastern Oregon

To the Editor:

Throughout his time in Congress, Greg Walden has championed legislation that has helped veterans, ranchers and rural families. We, the people of Eastern Oregon, appreciate that he fights against unnecessary regulations that hurt our state and is willing to stand up and fight for us on the national stage.

Walden truly represents the Second District of Oregon and understands our unique culture. This year alone he has passed legislation to fix the fire management problems faced by Crooked River Ranch residents, got the Hammonds pardoned and is fighting against the opioid crisis.

He works for the people he represents and deserves to be re-elected. I will be voting for him again.

Cheryl Cruson  
Ontario

### Chase: Distressed by the USFS Blue Mountains plan

To the Editor:

I was shocked when I read the editorial to "Friends of the Blue Mountains" tendered by the U.S. Forest

Service supervisors (Aug. 17, The Observer).

The proposed revised forest plan has approximately 6,000 pages and was just recently released. The comment period is 60 days. I challenge anyone to read government verbiage at the rate of 100 pages a day. So I will just point out a few of the things I have gleaned from reading a summary of the revised plan.

The Wallowa Whitman National Forest will go from being an open forest to a virtually closed forest. The only roads that will be traveled on will be designated main roads, and most secondary roads will be closed. If secondary roads are closed, the chances of wild-fire control would decrease since those roads would be gated or tank trapped and eventually would be overgrown and non-accessible. If you are caught off a designated road, on the first offense you could be fined \$5,000. A second offense could bring jail time and confiscation of your vehicle.

Another recommendation of the "plan" is an increase of 70,000 acres of new wilderness. In addition, they propose wilderness study areas throughout the forest that will be off limits to any type of activity while these studies take place, which could take years.

I am distressed about the mismanagement of the forest now. Thirty or so years ago, logging occurred, grazing was taking place, roads were maintained. The motto of the forest service was "the land of many uses." Now I see dead and dying trees, very little logging, dense undergrowth (a major fire fuel), noxious weeds and no or very little thinning.

Can we really expect an organization that has grossly mismanaged our resources to submit a document that explains how a forest should be operated?

The USFS seems to think it possesses the answers about the forest the community does not. This mentality has led to a plan that is heavy on environmental ideology and light on socio-economic development of rural communities.

Allan Chase  
Union

### Shawkat: Voting is only way to hold politicians accountable

To the Editor:

Is voting in November a top priority for you? Registering is easy in Oregon; just go to <https://sos.oregon.gov/voting/Pages/registration.aspx>. Or, obtain a paper application at a library or post office, and mail it before Oct. 16.

Some politicians will say anything to get elected and then act differently once in office. Your vote is the only way to hold politicians accountable; it is how we tell them they are doing a good/bad job.

You heard about the candidate who lost by one vote — that one vote could have been yours. If you say your vote doesn't matter, then you are saying that you don't matter and that is not true.

You really want something to happen with respect to forest management that makes sense, don't you? Then vote: Atkinson, McLeod-Skinner, Golden, Marsh, Witt and Thuren.

Louise D. Shawkat  
Ashland

### Sundermann: Someone with decency should represent Second District

To the Editor:

Greg Walden is running for Congress from your district. Mr. Walden has come to my district in the past year to raise money.

I live in Portland, not in District 2. The health care repeal Mr. Walden worked on impacted people in Portland and every other area of our country. I hope my voice can be heard as one person who

### 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](mailto:news@lagrandeobserver.com) or mail them to La Grande Observer, 1406 5th St., La Grande, Ore., 97850.

#### Letters deadline

The Observer does not run endorsements of more than 350 words.

The Observer will institute a deadline for letters to the editor, so we can be fair with all the letters we receive and allow for responses before Election Day if necessary. Please submit your endorsement letters to the editor by noon Friday, Oct. 26. You can email them to [news@lagrandeobserver.com](mailto:news@lagrandeobserver.com), drop them off at our La Grande location, or mail them to The Observer, 1406 Fifth St., La Grande, 97850.

We will publish our last letters on Friday, Nov. 2. Election Day is Nov. 6.

objects to Mr. Walden's disregard for human life.

When Greg Walden chaired the committee that worked to repeal the Affordable Care Act, I wrote letters to every one of his offices telling him my family story. My brother had cancer and he depended on the Affordable Care Act to get treatment after a relapse. He needed surgery and another round

of chemotherapy. My letter asked Mr. Walden to remember that health care is a matter of life or death. I received no reply from Mr. Walden or any of his offices.

Perhaps someone with more compassion and decency might better represent the people of your district.

Kathryn Sundermann  
Portland

## CONTACT YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

**President Donald Trump:** The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C. 20500; 202-456-1414; fax 202-456-2461; to send comments, go to [www.whitehouse.gov/contact](http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact).

**U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley:** D.C. office: 313 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. Phone: 202-224-3753. Fax: 202-228-3997. Website: [merkley.senate.gov/](http://merkley.senate.gov/). Email: [merkley.senate.gov/contact/](mailto:merkley.senate.gov/contact/). Portland office: One World Trade Center, 121 S.W. Salmon St. Suite 1250, Portland,

OR 97204; 503-326-3386; fax 503-326-2900. Pendleton office: 310 S.E. Second St. Suite 105, Pendleton 97801; 541-278-1129; email [elizabeth\\_scheeler@merkley.senate.gov](mailto:elizabeth_scheeler@merkley.senate.gov).

**U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden:** D.C. office: 221 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510-3703; phone: 202-224-5244; fax 202-228-2717. Website: [wyden.senate.gov](http://wyden.senate.gov). Email: [wyden.senate.gov/contact/](mailto:wyden.senate.gov/contact/). La Grande office: 105 Fir St., No. 210, La Grande, OR 97850; 541-962-7691; fax, 541-963-0885; email [kathleen\\_cathey@wyden.senate.gov](mailto:kathleen_cathey@wyden.senate.gov).

**U.S. Rep. Greg Walden (2nd District):** D.C. office: 2185 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515-0001, 202-225-6730; fax 202-225-5774. Website: [walden.house.gov/](http://walden.house.gov/). Email: [walden.house.gov/e-mail-greg](mailto:walden.house.gov/e-mail-greg). La Grande office: 1211 Washington Ave., La Grande, OR 97850; 541-624-2400, email [jorden.noyes@mail.house.gov](mailto:jorden.noyes@mail.house.gov).

**U.S. Department of Justice:** Main switchboard, 202-504-2000; comment line, 202-353-1555.

**Oregon Gov. Kate Brown:** 900 Court St. N.E., Salem, OR 97301; 503-

378-4582.

**Oregon Secretary of State Dennis Richardson:** 136 State Capitol, Salem OR 97310-0722; 503-986-1523.

**Oregon State Treasurer Tobias Reed:** 350 Winter St. N.E., Suite 100, Salem, OR 97301-3896; 503-378-4329.

**Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum:** Justice Building, Salem, OR 97301-4096; 503-378-4400.

**State Sen. William S. Hansell (29th District/Pendleton):** Salem office: 900 Court St. N.E., S-423, Salem, OR 97301; 503-986-1729. Website: [www.oregonlegislature.gov/hansell](http://www.oregonlegislature.gov/hansell). Email: [sen.billhansell@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:sen.billhansell@oregonlegislature.gov).

**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](http://www.oregonlegislature.gov/barreto). Email: [rep.gregbarreto@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto: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](http://www.oregonlegislature.gov/smithg). Email: [rep.gregsmith@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:rep.gregsmith@oregonlegislature.gov).

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Phone: 541-963-3161

Toll free (Oregon): 1-800-422-3110

Fax: 541-963-7804

Email: [news@lagrandeobserver.com](mailto:news@lagrandeobserver.com)

Website: [www.lagrandeobserver.com](http://www.lagrandeobserver.com)

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POSTMASTER

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