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Exclusion letters are out, 2A
Keeping on Keto, 1B



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Good day to our valued subscriber Phoebe Smith of La Grande

‘Historic’ timber pact reached

By Sam Stites
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon’s timber industry and environmentalists reached a new deal to protect forest waters, modernize logging regulations and create a new conservation plan.

Gov. Kate Brown announced the deal Monday with representatives of both interests.

The two sides have been at odds over policy and practices for decades, and this agreement aims to create a mediation process for updating the Oregon Forest Practices Act, passed in 1971.

The deal has three major points, the first being participation in a mediated process to change the Forest Practices Act by creating a conservation plan for all private timberland to protect threatened and endangered species and provide certainty for the timber industry.

The second piece is agreement over legislation that would require timber companies to notify nearby residents when aerial spraying of pesticides occurs and place buffers along streams in southern Oregon forests that supply drinking water.

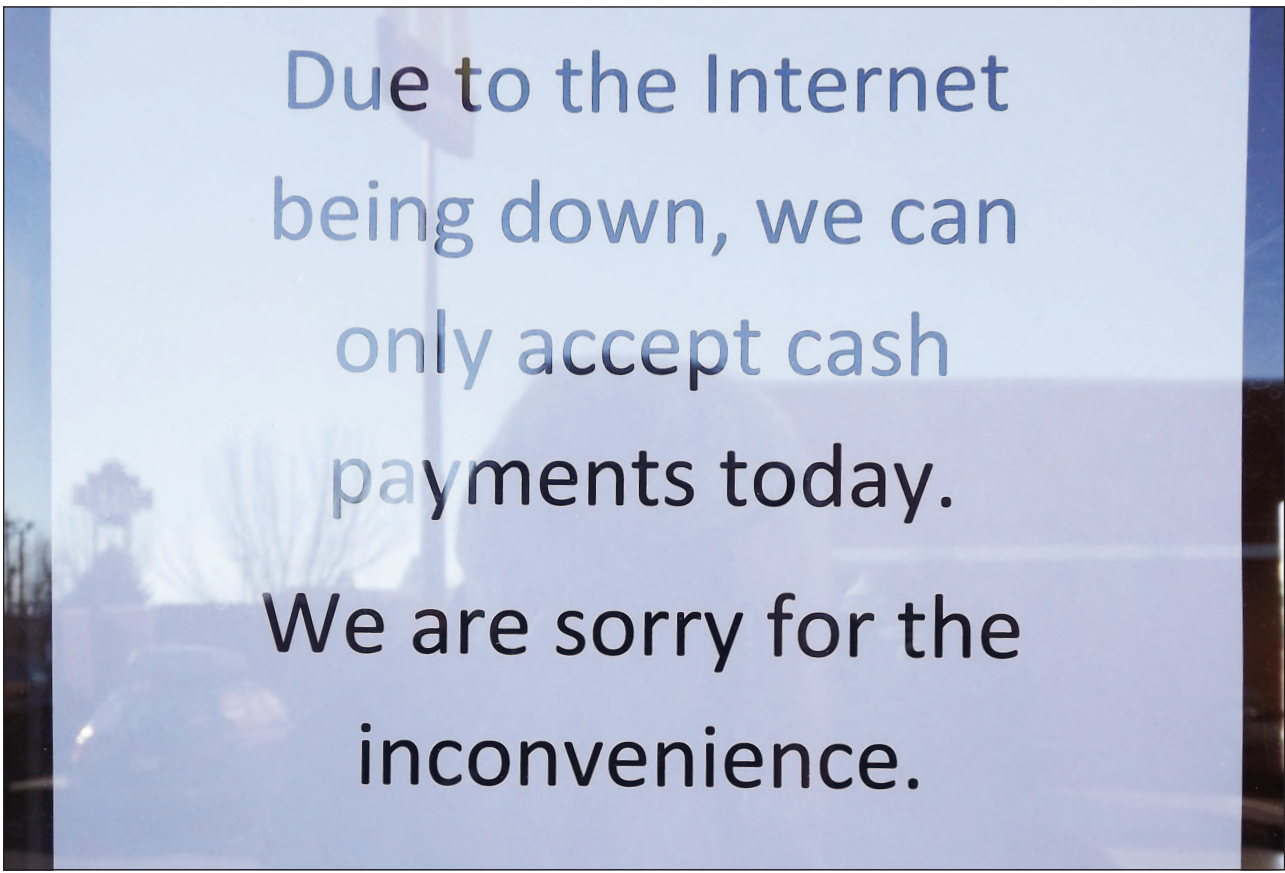
Finally, both sides agreed to drop forestry-related ballot initiatives and pending litigation.

Environmental groups were working to get stricter forest rules into law by going to the voters this fall.

The agreement was joined by Hampton Lumber, Weyerhaeuser, Stimson Lumber, Roseburg Forest Products, Hancock Natural Resource Group and Port Blakely and the Oregon Small Woodlands Association on the timber side. Oregon Wild, Cascadia Wildlands, Beyond Toxics, the Wild Salmon Center, Oregon League of Conservation Voters and Rogue Riverkeeper highlight the environmental groups that signed on.

“This agreement is a genuine show of good faith from everyone involved,” Brown said at a news conference Monday morning “It ensures

See **Timber** / Page 5A



Staff photo by Dick Mason

This sign is on display at Wendy’s in La Grande, one of several businesses feeling the effects of the area’s internet outage, the result of last week’s flooding.

Flood floors internet

By Sabrina Thompson and Dick Mason
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The aftermath of last week’s winter storm and subsequent flooding carried through the weekend and prompted the Union County Board of Commissioners to declare a state of emergency.

The board met Monday at noon in an emergency session. Commissioner Donna Beverage was the lone board member present. Commissioners Paul Anderes and Matt Scarfo called in. They were participating in the Association of Oregon Counties’ effort to lobby lawmakers in Salem during the legislation session.

The emergency resolution noted the Grande Ronde River on Thursday reached a record crest of 8.54 feet. The high water eroded the river’s banks, creating flooding in many Union County communities. The board voted 3-0 in favor of the declaration, which comes in the wake of Gov. Kate Brown

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Speaking up on cap and trade

By Dick Mason
The Observer

SALEM — Union County Commissioner Paul Anderes spoke out against the state Senate’s cap-and-trade bill at a hearing Thursday of the Senate Environmental and Natural Resources Committee in Salem.

Anderes addressed the committee as a private citizen and not as a representative of the Union County Board of Commissioners. He said he opposes Senate Bill 1530 on three counts.

First, he asked for an ecological and economic study of the potential effects of the legislation on each of the 36 counties in Oregon.

Anderes told the committee he was concerned that positions and opinions on both sides of this issue have been based upon partisan politics and philosophical positioning rather than fact. He read from a letter similar to what the county board on Wednesday considered

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Local artist participates in Portland exhibit

By Sabrina Thompson
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Eastern Oregon University art professor Susan Murrell is one of 18 Pacific Northwest artists whose work is on display at the “Making a Better Painting” exhibition in Portland.

“When I discovered all the PNW artists who would be involved, from the organizers to the other exhibiting painters, I knew it would be a worthwhile event,” Murrell said. “Over the years I have followed the work of many of the artists showing, so it was an honor to be included. Maintaining connections and community with artists whose work is engaging and challenging is really important to me.”

The Ronna and Eric Hoffman Gallery of Contemporary Art at Lewis and Clark College is hosting the exhibit until March 15. Murrell joins artists from Seattle, Portland and Walla Walla in the show and is the lone artist from Eastern Oregon. She contributed “Tipping Point,” a blend of watercolor, acrylic and vinyl paints on multiple panels that reach 8 feet high tall, 14 feet wide and spills onto the floor into a drawing of sand. Murrell said the inspiration for this piece came from the universal and personal process of experiencing presence through absence.

“I feel like we are in a moment where the phrase ‘Tipping Point’ can be interpreted as a line we are crossing that we cannot come back from, or that we are on the edge of a shift in consciousness and consequently real change,” she explained. “In general, I am exploring how our concept of landscape has shifted through technology, specifically now in light



Photo contributed by Susan Murrell

Eastern Oregon University art professor Susan Murrell’s piece “Tipping Point” is on display at the Ronna and Eric Hoffman Gallery at Lewis and Clark College, Portland. She is one of 18 Pacific Northwest artists participating in the exhibition “Making a Better Painting.” Here, “Tipping point” is on display during fall 2019 at Boise State University.

of the climate crisis.”

Murrell said she is pleased to have her work on display. She said she never considers a piece truly finished until it has the chance to spark conversation.

“I really value participating in thematic group exhibitions,” she said. “They have an ability to contextualize what I am making and create connections with artists

who are working with similar ideas, aesthetics or processes.”

While teaching painting, print-making, drawing and capstone courses at Eastern in La Grande, Murrell said it is important for her to have exhibition experience to share the professional world and share that experience of vulnerability with her students.

“I don’t know what effect it has,”

she said, “but my gut says it is important that they see me creating work and participating in the wider arts community.”

“Making a Better Painting” also includes a symposium March 6 and 7 concerning contemporary painting in connection with this exhibition. Murrell will be speaking on the panel, “Vital Matter: Painting in the Anthropocene.”

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WEATHER

Full forecast on the back of B section



Tonight
33 LOW
A shower early



Wednesday
41/27
Mostly cloudy

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