

THE OBSERVER

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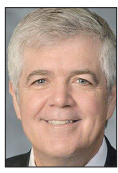
WEEKEND EDITION

\$1.50

River Democracy Act far from a done deal, Bentz says

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**
Capital Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. Rep. Cliff Bentz, Oregon's only Republican member of Congress, is pushing back against the proposed River Democracy Act in a letter sent Tuesday, Nov. 16, to all 62 county commissioners in his mostly rural district.



Bentz

The bill, proposed by Democratic Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, would add nearly 4,700 miles of designated Wild and Scenic rivers across Oregon, and calls for widening protective stream buffers from a quarter mile to a half mile on both sides.



Beverage

According to Wyden, the River Democracy Act was developed based on more than 15,000 nominations from 2,500 Oregonians. It has garnered criticism from county officials, as well as the timber and ranching industries, wary of new land restrictions and regulations.

In his letter, Bentz stated he is opposed to the legislation and that, despite receiving a hearing in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, it remains far from a done deal.

For example, he said the River Democracy Act does not have a companion bill in the House, nor has it received any consideration in the chamber to date.

"My Oregon House colleagues, all Democrats, have not publicly supported this bill," Bentz said. "At the time of writing this letter, (it) only has the support of Oregon's two senators."

The Capital Press contacted Oregon's four other House members — Reps. Earl Blumenauer, Suzanne Bonamici, Kurt Schrader and Peter DeFazio — to

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CELEBRATING THANKSGIVING



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

Alisha Delatori receives a Thanksgiving meal kit that was prepared by Eastern Oregon University housing director Jeremy Jones, left, and the university's food service general manager, Ron Wheeler, background, at the Hoke Union Building on Wednesday, Nov. 24, 2021.

An on-campus THANKSGIVING

EOU staff hands out turkeys, Thanksgiving kits to students, staff staying on campus during the holiday

By **DAVIS CARBAUGH**
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Eastern Oregon University made sure its students and staff had a full plate for Thanksgiving.

Whether it be work, studies or other obligations, some students and staff found themselves staying on campus on the holiday. Thanks to the university's food services and residence life employees, students and staff on campus had the opportunity to join in on a community Thanksgiving meal or take home all the necessities needed to cook their own meals at home.

"It's a fun opportunity for students who have to stay on campus and might be away from their families," said Jeremy Jones, the residence life director at Eastern.

Jones helped organize the campus Thanksgiving festivities alongside Ronald Wheeler, the general manager of food services at the university. The two helped organize a Thanksgiving feast on campus the week before the holiday, the distribution of Thanksgiving kits the day before the holiday and a Thanksgiving Day meal on campus.

At Hoke Union Building from noon to 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 24, Jones and

Wheeler handed out kits containing whole turkeys ready for baking, dinner rolls, sparkling wine, aluminum baking pans and ingredients for Thanksgiving side dishes. Those participating could also choose from a variety of frozen pies to go along with the meal.

Any students and staff were eligible to sign up, as well as several community members who reached out to pick up extra turkeys. Jones and Wheeler handed out roughly 20 turkeys and Thanksgiving kits.

The idea of delivering the necessities for a Thanksgiving meal came to Jones and Wheeler last year during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, when families were discouraged from traveling and gathering in large groups prior to the vaccine. Last year they gave out turkeys.

"We've ramped it up and done more than normal this year," Wheeler said.

Wheeler also organized the on-campus Thanksgiving dinner the week before and distributed pre-made meals to students who knew they would be staying on campus during the holiday.

"That was a lot of fun," he said. "Everyone really enjoyed that."

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Alex Wittwer/The Observer

Jeremy Jones, housing director for Eastern Oregon University, retrieves a turkey from the walk-in fridge at Hoke Union Building on campus on Wednesday, Nov. 24, 2021. The university offered free Thanksgiving meal kits to students and staff that included a thawed turkey, assorted pies, a roasting sheet and kitchen staples.

A life of impact

Lee Insko remembered for a legacy of compassion, life lessons

By **DICK MASON**
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Lee Insko led Eastern Oregon University to many tri-

umphs in the athletic arena during his 14 seasons as a head coach for the Mountaineers. But along the way he did much more than win.

Insko, who died Tuesday, Nov. 16, at Grande Ronde Hospital at age 86, also taught life lessons so timeless and enduring that some of his players did not fully appreciate them until decades later.

"I never realized the impact he had had on my life until I got older," said Greg Oveson, of Wallowa.

Oveson played for Eastern from 1970 to 1973, during the first half of Insko's 10-year tenure as Eastern's head football coach, which ran from 1968 through 1977.

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Eastern Oregon University/Contributed Photo

Lee Insko served as a coach at Eastern Oregon University for 14 years and later was named the dean of EOU's distance education program.

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WEATHER

Full forecast on the back of B section

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La Grande, Oregon

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TUESDAY

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