



EPA mum as What's Upstream stays afloat

More lawmakers question EPA's role in continuing anti-farm campaign

By DON JENKINS
The Capital Press

An Environmental Protection Agency-funded media campaign to change how Washington state regulates agriculture remained largely intact Tuesday, one week after the agency said the campaign misused EPA funds and that it was taking corrective action.

What's Upstream, a partnership between the Swinomish Indian tribe and environmental groups, has maintained a website, letter-writing campaign, Facebook page and one billboard.

The EPA through a spokesman in Seattle declined Tuesday to comment on what, if anything, the agency is doing to dismantle the campaign.

The tribe last week took down a billboard in Olympia and said it voluntarily planned to take down a second one in Bellingham because of EPA's concerns. The billboard has remained up. Efforts to reach a tribe official Tuesday were unsuccessful.

The tribe and environmental groups characterize What's Upstream as a campaign to educate the public about sources of water pollution.

Farm groups and some lawmakers criticize the campaign as an over-the-top smearing of farmers and ranchers and possibly an illegal use of federal funds for political activities.

"The campaign goes on and the damage being done to farmers continues. We're very concerned and disappointed EPA won't take stronger action to end this abuse, so we will have to look to our elected representatives," said Gerald Baron, director of Save Family Farming in northwestern Washington.

EPA records show the agency encouraged the campaign as far back as 2011 and directed the tribe to use EPA grants for public education "directed at decision makers and regional stakeholders."

The tribe implemented elements of the media campaign in 2013 with the help of a public-relations firm, Strategies 360, and the knowledge of the EPA, according to EPA records.

What's Upstream apparently garnered little attention

Turn to EPA, Page 12

WATER



How we use it

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

More than 4 trillion gallons of precipitation falls on the country every day on average. That's nearly enough fresh water to fill the Great Salt Lake in Utah.

But roughly two-thirds of that water almost immediately evaporates into the atmosphere or is used by plants.

Of the remaining water, which flows to the ocean in rivers or collects in lakes and underground aquifers, less than half can realistically be put to "intensive beneficial uses," according to a federal government report.

Since only a fraction of the nation's rainfall and snow is available to use, water managers have been understandably nervous about meeting the multitude of needs in the future — particularly in the face of a larger population and warmer climate.

More people, less water

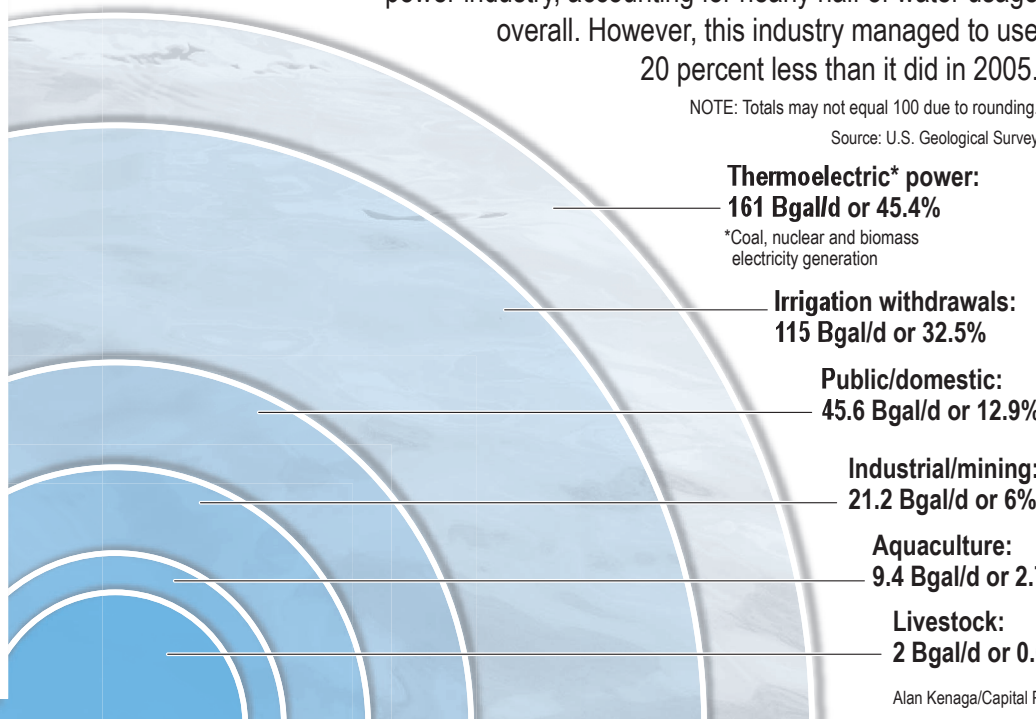
The good news is those worries have forced Americans to find ways to consume less water.

Turn to WATER, Page 12

Estimated water use in the U.S., 2010

At nearly 355 billion gallons per day in 2010, water use in the U.S. was still down 13 percent from 2005. The largest water user by far was the thermoelectric* power industry, accounting for nearly half of water usage overall. However, this industry managed to use 20 percent less than it did in 2005.

NOTE: Totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.
Source: U.S. Geological Survey



Though we use a lot of water, most of it evaporates or returns to ground

BLM's Western Oregon forest plan disappoints everyone

By ERIC MORTENSON
Capital Press

Timber industry groups believe the federal Bureau of Land Management's proposed new forest management plan for Western Oregon is a disaster that locks up 75 percent of the land, will cost jobs and leave forests more vulnerable to fire.

One group called it a "lose, lose, lose" plan for the environment, wildlife and rural communities.

As it turns out, conservation groups also think the proposed Resource Management



Associated Press file

This photo shows Bureau of Land Management timber outside Ruch, Ore. The BLM has released its draft of a new Western Oregon management plan, which neither the industry nor conservationists say they like.

Plan is lousy. They say it will increase logging, cut stream buffer zones in half, threaten drinking water quality and

harm endangered species.

For its part, the BLM believes it followed legal mandates and successfully split the difference between opposing points of view. In a news release, Acting State Director Jamie Connell said the BLM "achieved an extraordinary balance" between protecting threatened and endangered wildlife and allowing timber harvests that support the economy of rural communities.

Spokeswoman Sarah Levy said the BLM had to follow legal mandates that require the agency to protect threatened species such as salmon

and northern spotted owls, protect waterways, provide recreation opportunities and assure sustainable timber harvests on former Oregon & California Railroad (O&C) land it manages.

"It's really a middle-of-the-road plan," she said. "I would say both sides can find something in this plan that they like."

The Resource Management Plan covers about 2.5 million acres that the BLM administers in Western Oregon, including the Coos Bay,

Turn to PLAN, Page 12

Jumbo 6 Pack Annuals or 6" Veggie Plants

Now 3/\$9.00

EVERYDAY PRICE \$3.59 & \$3.99 • Sale price good thru April 24

598 N. Wilbur Ave., Walla Walla • (509) 876-8095 • Mon-Sat 8-7, Sun 10-6 • www.cascadefarmandoutdoor.com

