

Oregon

Timber interests welcome Trump win

By DYLAN DARLING
The Register-Guard

EUGENE, Ore. (AP) — When he visited Eugene last spring, Donald Trump promised to revive Oregon’s timber industry, which for decades has been hamstrung by severe curbs against logging in federal forests west of the Cascade Range.

“Timber jobs (in Oregon) have been cut in half since 1990,” he said during his May 6 stump speech to a revved-up crowd at the Lane Events Center. “We are going to bring them up, folks, we are going to do it really right, we are going to bring them up, OK?”

Trump didn’t offer specifics as to how — or how much — he would revive logging and milling, but he alluded to loosening federal restrictions.

Now, Trump supporters and critics in Oregon will see if he can live up to his promise.

Trump’s election as president brings optimism to the state timber industry and acute



Capital Press File

The Oregon timber industry is “cautiously optimistic” a Trump administration will open the door to a more realistic policy for managing federal land in the state. More than half the land in Oregon is owned and managed by the federal government.

uneasiness to environmental groups that have fought for decades to ensure that logging on federal lands complies with federal environmental law.

Both sides now wonder if and how Trump’s administration and Republican lawmakers might seek to weaken long-standing environmental laws, such as the Endangered Species Act.

Enforcement of that law and the National Environmental Policy Act were key in the late 1980s and early 1990s to halting the intensive logging that had prevailed for decades on federal forests in Western Oregon, Western Washington and Northern California.

The Northwest Forest Plan, implemented by the Clinton administration in 1994, has

severely restricted logging on federal land in the region since.

But undoing the Northwest Forest Plan and rolling back environmental laws are not necessarily easy tasks — even with a Republican in the White House and a GOP-controlled House and Senate.

Timber industry ‘cautiously optimistic’

Timber interests in Oregon welcome Trump as president.

“We’re cautiously optimistic it’s going to present some opportunities for us to put people back to work in rural communities and certainly to improve the health of our forest,” said Jim Geisinger, executive vice president of the Associated Oregon Loggers. “For the last two decades, we’ve just seen too many catastrophic wildfires, too many mills close, too many rural communities fall apart socially and economically, and I think this will be an opportunity to restore some of that.”

For 40 years, Geisinger has

been a voice for logging in the state, traveling to Washington, D.C., to speak about how federal policies affect the state’s timber industry.

Cause for concern for environmentalists

The worry among environmental groups contrasts the optimism of timber interests in regards to how Trump and the officials he appoints will manage public forests.

Possibilities for agriculture secretary, who oversees the U.S. Forest Service, include Texas Agriculture Secretary Sid Miller, and possibilities for interior secretary, who oversees the Bureau of Land Management, include former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin and Lucas Oil co-founder Forrest Lucas, according to news reports.

All of them lean toward resource extraction rather than preservation.

Federal forests in Western Oregon are split between the Forest Service and the BLM.

“We don’t think Trump has

a mandate to weaken environmental protections or return to old-growth clearcutting on public lands,” Arran Robertson, spokesman for Oregon Wild, wrote in an email. The Portland-based nonprofit advocates old-growth protection.

“Clearly, those were not major issues in the presidential campaign,” he wrote. “However, there are certainly folks in the logging industry who feel the time is ripe to repeal the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, etc. ... and prioritize their interests in public lands over other values (like tourism and recreation, clean drinking water and wildlife).”

For decades, environmental groups have sued over the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, National Environmental Policy Act and other environmental laws.

“Everything appears to be on the table at this point,” said Josh Laughlin, executive director of environmental group Cascadia Wildlands in Eugene.



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OREGON FFA AG SALES TEAM POSTS
DOUBLE SUCCESSES AT CONVENTION



Geoff Parks/For the Capital Press

Ryan Berhorst holds his award for coming in first in the Ag Sales competition at the FFA National Convention in Indianapolis, Ind. He is flanked by his sister, Abbey, left, and Elsie Duyn, teammates at the national convention. Not pictured is the fourth teammate, Liberty Greenlund.

By Geoff Parks
For the Capital Press

YAMHILL, Ore. — A four-person team of Yamhill-Carlton High School students came away from the recent National FFA Convention with second place in Ag Sales — and the team’s youngest member took first place overall in the competition.

Before their Oct. 19-22 visit to Indianapolis to compete against and mingle with 63,000 of their FFA peers, 17-year-olds Elsie Duyn and Abbey Berhorst, along with Ryan Berhorst, 14, and 18-year-old Liberty Greenlund had to navigate their way through a series of district and state FFA competitions.

The chapter took second in the seven-chapter District FFA contest earlier this year and first place in the Oregon state FFA event, said Y-C chapter president Duyn. She also took first place in the individual Hog Proficiency competition at the state meet.

The national second place in Ag Sales that was conferred upon the Y-C team was bolstered by Ryan Berhorst’s individual first place finish. The Y-C freshman came out on top of a group of 160 FFA members from around the country to earn \$1,000 and an impressive plaque.

Greenlund graduated from Y-C in June and is the Oregon FFA secretary. She and the two other young women on the team were effusive about both the team’s second-place success and Ryan’s individual triumph in Ag Sales.

“Ryan was a ‘pick-me-up,’” said Duyn. Y-C’s was an all-girls team until one of the students headed off to Purdue University and Ryan — Abbey’s younger brother — became available.

“We picked him up two months before the national competition,” said Duyn. He was on the team that also found second-place success in district competition.

“He was really the only one in our chapter who had experience with (the Ag Sales competition), so we just figured, ‘Why not?’” Abbey said of her younger brother.

Greenlund added that she felt Ryan, the only freshman in the national competition, “put his whole heart and soul into it.”

“For the national competition, they actually chose the product for us, which was John Deere balers,” Ryan said. “So we studied all the manufacturer’s balers, the features and benefits of each of them.”

“We had to know those balers inside and out, because we didn’t know which questions would be asked,” Duyn said.

She said that since the four-member team “basically spent most of our entire summer” studying at the home of one of the coaches — Greg Wildhaber — they were planning a reunion dinner there to celebrate their accomplishments.

The four members also have plans after high school. Greenlund is traveling the state in her position as state FFA secretary and will attend Eastern Oregon University next year, while Duyn heads to Linfield College to study nursing and Abbey Berhorst has her eyes on the Eastern Oregon University agricultural education program.

The youngest member, Ryan Berhorst, has yet to settle on a definite course after high school. He claims an interest — for now — in underwater welding, but indicated that may change.



Courtesy of Yamhill-Carlton FFA

Left to right, Yamhill-Carlton High School FFA students Liberty Greenlund, Elsie Duyn, coaches Greg Wildhaber and Ivory McLaughlin, and students Ryan Berhorst and Abbey Berhorst in Indianapolis, Ind., with some of the awards they won at the National FFA Convention.

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