



Lostine establishes NE Oregon's first 'Firewise' community

By **BILL BRADSHAW**
EO Media Group

LOSTINE, Ore. — The Lostine Canyon neighborhood has become northeast Oregon's first nationally recognized "Firewise" community, an event that could lead to more efforts to prevent or combat wildfires in Wallowa County.

Firewise communities are a part of a program that teaches people how to adapt to living with wildfire and encourages neighbors to work together and take action now to prevent future losses.

The approximately 110 properties with 120 structures make up about 9,600 acres south of Lostine, a community of about 200 people in the valley between the towns of Wallowa and Enterprise, the county seat. About 45 individuals are participating in the community, according to Mike Eng, the leader of the Lostine Canyon Firewise Committee.

On Friday, Oct. 11, at the Lostine Wildlife Area the Firewise groups and Commissioner Susan Roberts met to dedicate signs along the road recognizing the Firewise community. Roberts expressed hopes that Lostine's actions will be an example to other communities in the county.

"Hopefully, your accomplishment will serve to inspire other communities to take important and necessary steps to improve their protection from the potentially catastrophic risks of wildfire," Roberts said.

Boutique flour mill hits its stride

By **BRAD CARLSON**
Capital Press

The new Hillside Grain flour mill ran well initially, and even better after an air-flow fix.

"It has been a lot of starts and stops," owner Brett Stevenson said. "We've definitely had some glitches to work out. Over the summer, it was a rollercoaster."

She opened the flour mill last spring on part of Hillside Ranch, a farm her father, John Stevenson, owns south of Bellevue, Idaho. Grain industry representatives said at the time that expanding local processing capacity, and thus market opportunities, benefits growers.

"Now we have a good understanding of the system and we are in consistent production," Brett Stevenson said.

The mill has been running smoothly since late August, after air flow was increased in the pneumatic system that moves the grain and flour.

"We had a lack of air

Eng emphasized the necessity for the program.

"We live in an extreme fire-risk area and we have to learn to adapt to that," he said. "There's not much we can do about changing the weather, changing the terrain, changing the land ownership and some of the ways it's managed."

Lostine Canyon residents interested in establishing a Firewise Community first met in April 2018. Since then, neighbors in the Lostine Canyon have been working on becoming better informed about how to prevent wildfire from destroying their homes and their community, how to respond in the inevitable event of a wildfire in the Lostine Canyon and how to recover after a wildfire passes through their community.

Residents have been creating "fire safe" perimeters around their homes, removing closely spaced and insect-damaged trees and trimming low-hanging branches. They have taken advantage of offers by foresters Tim Cudmore and Eric Carlson, of the Oregon Department of Forestry, to help identify diseased and insect-infested trees to help reduce fuel loads around their homes, while also preserving privacy and wildlife habitat.

They have also taken advantage of free exterior home inspections by one of their neighbors, Gary Willis, a former Hood River, Ore., fire chief, to learn what they can do to better fireproof the exterior of their homes.

flow, so we didn't get the product moving through the way we should — we were getting plugs or clogs," Stevenson said. "We increased air flow on both the grain-cleaning and milling sides."

This year's wheat crop posed another challenge.

"The past couple of years, we've had great protein and quality in the crop," Stevenson said. "This year, unfortunately, we did not get the protein level I was hoping for."

She bought some wheat from a neighboring organic grower. She hasn't started milling it, "but it should be great," she said. "It's the same variety we have been milling, and all of the test numbers look good."

Hillside makes wheat flour and a small amount of barley flour. Extraction is mainly from the kernel, which helps the flour retain more bran and germ than sifted white flour.

"Quality, we hit right away," Stevenson said.

Kloes named new executive director of AgForestry

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**
Capital Press

Matt Kloes is the new executive director of Washington state's AgForestry Leadership program.

He was program director for four years, and was interim president for six months.

"Matt possesses a level of passion for AgForestry like none other, has fresh ideas to keep AgForestry as the premier leadership program in our state, and as a Class 36 graduate is a product of what AgForestry creates," Michael Broeckel, chairman of the board of directors, said in a press release.

Kloes said he was drawn to the opportunity to make a greater impact on the program, which develops leaders in agriculture and forestry by developing their leadership skills and knowledge of the industries.

"As I look at the next 40 years, I think we have an incredible opportunity

that's also a threat," he said.

"The pace of change will never be slower than it is today. We really need to equip our leaders to provide leadership and guidance to their organizations and industries in that kind of environment."

The risk is that change could pass an organization by, Kloes said.

Kloes believes the industry is getting better at telling its stories. Agricultural representatives are using social media to good effect, he said.

"The problem is there's a lot of noise and conflicting information out there," he said. "I think we're still figuring out how to deal with that."

Kloes grew up in San Jose, Calif. He worked for four years at Washing-



Matt Kloes

ton State University, then nearly 10 years as an analyst at Northwest Farm Credit Services.

"It's incredible when you sit back and think about all the hats that farmers wear today," he said. "They're risk managers, marketers, they're running the production side. There's so much that goes into an operation, they just really have my deepest respect."

Kloes said he considers the AgForestry program "the best kept secret in Washington."

"We need to get better at telling our story, so when people, communities, our giving partners hear the name, they are proud that they support our organization," he said. "And also that people who aren't yet supporters understand what it is we do and maybe become supporters."

Top priority for the organization is fundraising to cover

costs, secure the future and make improvements, he said.

Enthusiasm is evident when speaking to a graduate of an AgForestry class. Kloes credits the camaraderie of the people sharing the experience together.

"You can call any AgForestry alum as an AgForestry alum and they will drop everything to help you," he said.

Participants begin to develop leadership skills immediately, he noted.

"It changes the way you look at the world," he said. "It helps you to understand both sides of the coin of issues, and then sometimes also the edge of the coin, that additional perspective."

It can be easy to surround oneself only with agreeing viewpoints, Kloes said.

"AgForestry really forces us to examine what we think, why we think it and consider the merits of other points of view," he said.

Idaho potato industry to meet Nov. 13

By **BRAD CARLSON**
Capital Press

The annual Big Idaho Potato Harvest Meeting will be Nov. 13 in Fort Hall.

"We have put this meeting in November so all growers can participate," because harvest by then is completed, Idaho Potato Commission President and CEO Frank Muir said. About 300 attended the free meeting in each of the last two years.

The meeting will be at the Shoshone-Bannock Hotel and Event Center, 777 Bannock Trail.

One goal is to update growers on commission marketing, research and policy initiatives so they can provide input, he said. The commission collects a checkoff of 12.5 cents per hundredweight — 7.5 cents, or 60%, from the grower and 5 cents from a subsequent handler such as a shipper or processor.

"We encourage all growers to know what the commission is doing with their potato-tax money," Muir said.

The event starts at 9 a.m. with meetings of the Idaho Grower Shippers Association, United Potato Growers of Idaho, Southern Idaho Potato Cooperative and the raw-products group of the Idaho Association of Commerce and Industry.

Presentations by Potatoes USA President and CEO Blair Richardson and National Potato Council CEO Kam Quarles are scheduled at 11 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., respectively.

Muir's presentation at a noon lunch will cover the commission's annual marketing plan as well as findings in a study by Optimization Group of Ann Arbor, Mich., of the industry's economic impact. Grower-of-the-year awards will be presented by Potato Growers of Idaho.

Presentations also are scheduled on the commission's quality-assurance project and an updated, commission-funded study on the best location for the industry's next major North American processing facility.

Presenters also likely will discuss this year's crop — challenged by a hard freeze Oct. 10-11 during harvest — trade issues and opportunities and demand trends.

"We will be talking again about some of the more long-term issues, such as redistributing in regard to how our grower commissioners are selected," Muir said.



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CORE Training is complimentary with \$4 admission to the expo. No registration is required.

A maximum of 4 credits are available (pending)

- **10:30a -12:30p** • (2 CORE credits)
Worker Protection Standard, What Does It Look Like On Your Farm, Kaci Buhl
Pesticide Fate in Off-target Environment and Mitigation Measures, Jeff Jenkins
- **11:00a** • **Pape Group, David Gaffney, Corporate Fleet Compliance Specialist**
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- **12:30p-2p Lunch Break** • on own, concessions available
- **2:00p-4:00p** • (2 CORE credits)
Oregon Agriculture Current Issues and Lesson Learned 2019, Andrea Sonnen (ODA)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13

- **10:30a** • **Forklift Certification Training – Santiam Classroom** (Advanced online registration required, free with admission) Includes classroom, workbook written knowledge check verification followed by a driving evaluation. Program provided by Overton Safety Training and Pape Material Handlings. Class limited to 40, and is provided in English only, attendees must be able to test in English.
 - **10:30a –12:00p** • **CPR / Aed With Standard First Aid** (Advanced online registration required and \$35 fee)
 - **1:00p – 5:00p** • **Train The Trainer Forklift Course - Details Online**
 - **1:00p – 2:00p** • **Standard First Aid** (Advanced online registration required & \$15 fee)
- Forklift Certification Training – 10:30a.m**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14

Santiam Building Classroom

- **10:30a -12:30p** • (2 CORE credits)
Worker Protection Standard, What Does It Look Like On Your Farm, Kaci Buhl
Pesticide Fate In Off-target Environment And Mitigation Measures, Jeff Jenkins
- **12:30p-2p Lunch Break** • on own, concessions available
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