

# USDA undersecretary visits with Oregon farmers reeling from disasters

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**  
Capital Press

WOODBURN, Ore. — Help is coming for Oregon farmers and ranchers who suffered through multiple natural disasters in 2021.

Robert Bonnie, USDA undersecretary for farm production and conservation, paid a visit to the state with U.S. Rep. Kurt Schrader, D-Ore., on Dec. 13 for a pair of roundtable meetings — one in Woodburn and one in Salem — to discuss new funding approved for disaster relief, as well as drought and wildfire mitigation.

The meetings coincided with a special legislative session where Oregon lawmakers passed a \$100 million drought relief package that includes \$40 million in forgivable loans to keep farmers afloat while they wait for federal aid.

Bonnie said the USDA will begin rolling out disaster assistance in 2022. Congress approved \$10 billion in September for the agency to expand its Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Plus Program, or WHIP+, which for the first time will cover crop losses due to extreme heat.

“Our hope is to move this winter on investments,” Bonnie told the roundtable in Woodburn. “We want to move quickly, and the agency has been moving quickly. ... There’s work you have to do to train



George Plaven/Capital Press

**Kyle Fessler, center, who oversees greenhouse production for Woodburn Nursery & Azaleas, leads a morning tour for U.S. Rep. Kurt Schrader, left, and Robert Bonnie, USDA undersecretary for farm production and conservation.**

your employees on how these dollars are going to go out. That’s already been happening.”

The morning started with a tour of Woodburn Nursery & Azaleas, a large operation with more than 200 employees and 225 acres in production.

Kyle Fessler, who oversees greenhouse production for the family farm, said Mother Nature posed serious challenges this year. It started with a major ice storm that hit the Willamette Valley in February, causing their outdoor-grown nursery stock to fold over like candy canes.

Then came a historic heat wave in late June, with temperatures reaching well above 100 degrees for several days straight and scorching ornamental plants.

“A lot of it was reworking the plants to get them to salability,” Fessler said.

## Specialty crops

State and farm leaders met with Bonnie and Schrader following the tour, urging the federal government to provide greater assistance in the face of mounting disasters.

The summer “heat dome” caused an estimated

\$50 million worth of damage to the Oregon nursery industry, and wiped out 50% of the state’s blackberries and raspberries. Heavy ice that blanketed the Willamette Valley also wreaked havoc on older hazelnut orchards, snapping branches and in some cases splitting whole trees to the trunk.

Yet these kinds of specialty crops are often left out of relief programs in the Farm Bill, which is written more for commodity crops like corn and soybeans.

Mary Anne Cooper, vice president of public policy for the Oregon Farm Bureau, told Bonnie she received calls from dozens of farmers who don’t qualify for USDA programs. Each time, there seems to be a different and unique reason.

“It starts to feel a little bit challenging,” Cooper said. “Is there something that will overall make the programs more workable for specialty crops?”

Bonnie said those longer discussions will take place as Congress writes a new farm bill. In the meantime, he said the USDA is working to make its programs as flexible as possi-

ble for all producers.

“We’re happy to look at flexibilities we can do now,” he said. “If there are particularly challenging issues, we’re more than happy to engage on that as well.”

The Oregon Department of Agriculture will administer the state’s \$40 million disaster loan program, covering crop damage that occurred in 2021. Loans will be forgiven if producers do not qualify for federal assistance.

Schrader, who represents part of the agriculture-rich Willamette Valley, said he is determined to close these gaps in coverage in the next farm bill.

“We’re going to have to write these disaster mitigation titles to actually reflect the fact that, maybe you didn’t lose the whole tree, but you lost a ton of branches and your hazelnut production is down 30%. Maybe you didn’t lose all your blueberries — the vines are still alive — but the crop has been destroyed by 80% because of the excessive heat that’s out there,” Schrader said.

“A lot of these things aren’t recognized in the disaster programs right now.”

# WDFW warns solar farm could be lights out for sage grouse

By **DON JENKINS**  
Capital Press

If built, a 2,390-acre solar farm on Badger Mountain in north-central Washington could finish off the state’s greater sage grouse population, the Department of Fish and Wildlife warns.

The mountain, near East Wenatchee and about 100 miles east of Seattle, is in Douglas County, the grouse’s “last stronghold” in the state, according to Fish and Wildlife regional director Brock Hoenes.

In a letter this month to the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council, Hoenes wrote that a solar farm on the mountain would be a significant risk to the grouse’s survival.

Although Aurora Solar LLC’s solar panels would cover mostly unirrigated farmland, the sage grouse rely on wheat fields, as well as shrub-steppe, Hoenes stated.

“The mosaic of habitats, including dryland wheat, are utilized by all stages of sage grouse for rearing, foraging, migration and movement,” he wrote.

An Aurora Solar spokesman responded Monday in an email. “We are in the early stages of working with EFSEC and the WDFW to determine how best to go about resolving WDFW concerns,” he said.

Aurora Solar applied to EFSEC in October after being blocked by a Douglas County ordinance that bans solar projects within 7 miles of habitat for any state protected species.

Although not federally listed, greater sage grouse are a state endangered species. The imperiled bird poses an obstacle for building solar farms east of the Cascades.

Gov. Jay Inslee’s latest budget proposal includes more money for Fish and Wildlife to reconcile solar farms and sage grouse recovery.

Fish and Wildlife counted 699 greater sage grouse in the state this year. Douglas County has the only self-sustaining population.

The company said in a presentation to EFSEC that Badger Mountain is ideal for a solar farm. It’s flat and sunny and 87% of the proposed project area is farmland.

The company surveyed the area in May and reported seeing no sage grouse or sage grouse droppings.

Hoenes said the survey was inadequate. There is longstanding evidence that sage grouse occupy the plateau, he said.

Last spring, after wildfires burned other sage grouse habitat in the county, 29 male sage grouse were seen on Badger Mountain.

Accounting for females, Badger Mountain likely had about 75 grouse, Hoenes said.

The only greater sage grouse known in Washington outside Douglas County are 24 males in Yakima County and three males in Franklin County.

Hoenes recommended the solar farm be moved or undergo a more thorough environmental review to consider options, including not building the solar farm.

Aurora says it has lined up leases with five property owners and is negotiating with the state Department of Natural Resources to lease land now leased for wheat farming.

If EFSEC approves the project, its recommendation will go to Inslee for a final decision. The governor has made climate change a focus of his administration, spurring renewable energy proposals east of the Cascades.

Aurora Solar is owned by Avangrid Renewables, which is part of the Iberdrola Group, a Spanish company that describes itself as a global leader in renewable energy.

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COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2014 FORD MUSTANG 2DR  
VIN = 1ZVBP8AMX5310295  
Amount due on lien \$1535.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
DAMON M LOMAS  
OREGON STATE CREDIT UNION

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COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2015 HYUN SONATA 4D  
VIN = KMHEC4A44FA136183  
Amount due on lien \$1455.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
SARAH RUTH-EVELYN CLARK WELLS  
FARGO AUTO

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COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2017 KIA NIRO UT  
VIN = KNDCB3LC5H5097144  
Amount due on lien \$1435.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
ARIEL M & NANCY C VINCENT

**LEGAL PURSUANT TO ORS CHAPTER 87**  
Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 12/27/2021. The sale will be held at 10:00am by  
LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
2005 FORD ECO CT  
VIN = 1FDNE35L85HA97447  
Amount due on lien \$281.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
TIMOTHY ELLING DBA CLUE PLUMBING  
STEARNS BANK NA

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LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
2005 GMC W45 DS  
VIN = J8DC4B16157007424  
Amount due on lien \$116.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
LIGHT TRUCK PARTS

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Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 12/30/2021. The sale will be held at 10:00am by  
LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
1997 FORD E150 VA  
VIN = 1FMEE11LOVH69932  
Amount due on lien \$116.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
COPART

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COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2019 TOYT RAV4 UT  
VIN = 2TR3RWRFFV2KW027776  
Amount due on lien \$1515.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
ANTON A LI  
TOYOTA MOTOR CREDIT CORP

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COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2015 KIA OPT 4D  
VIN = 5XXGM4A77FG460513  
Amount due on lien \$1435.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
NATHAN W & JANICE K WAGNER  
CENTRAL WILLAMETTE COMMUNITY CU

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Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 12/27/2021. The sale will be held at 10:00am by  
LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
2005 CHEV TAHOE UT  
VIN = 1GNEK13T65R114414  
Amount due on lien \$281.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
COUNTRY CASUALTY

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LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
2002 FORD F450 PU  
VIN = 1FDXF46S82ED01274  
Amount due on lien \$116.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
COMCAST CABLE COM MNGMT LLC  
COMCAST CABLE COM MNGMT LLC

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LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
2003 FORD 4DC VA  
VIN = 1FDWE45F63H90503  
Amount due on lien \$116.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
LIGHT TRUCK SALES

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COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2021 NEVI TRL  
VIN = 1N9AH3427MD175127  
Amount due on lien \$1435.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
CHRISTOPHER & CARRIE KASEBERG

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COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2019 HYUN KONA LL  
VIN = KM9K12AA7KU268222  
Amount due on lien \$1435.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
HEALTH IRVIN DAVILLIER JR  
CHRYSLER CAPITAL

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LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
1997 INTL 450 TK  
VIN = 1HTSLAAM9VH447929  
Amount due on lien \$281.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
OREGON MUTUAL INS CO

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LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
2008 FORD RANGER 4C  
VIN = 1FTZR45E88PB16719  
Amount due on lien \$116.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
MARK ALAN TURNER  
OREGON COMMUNITY CU

**LEGAL PURSUANT TO ORS CHAPTER 87**  
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BAKER & BAKER TOWING & CRANE  
2874 NEWBERG HWY WOODBURN, OR  
2016 INTL PROSTAR TR  
VIN = 3HSDJSNR9GN074236  
Amount due on lien \$51635.00  
Reputed owner(s) TCM TRUCKS LLC  
ARROW TRUCK SALES INC, BEACH TO BEACH LLC, FIRST NATIONAL BANK

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COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2008 FORD F350 FB  
VIN = 1FDWW36R68EA71293  
Amount due on lien \$1435.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
JT CONSTRUCTION NW INC/TED ALBEN UNITED FINANCE CO

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COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2021 KIA K5 4D  
VIN = 5XXG24J26MG018068  
Amount due on lien \$1435.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
DEBRA LYNN ANDERSON  
ONPOINT COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION

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LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
2003 GMC C4C TK  
VIN = 1GDCE4E1173F518125  
Amount due on lien \$281.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
PROBUILD COMPANY LLC  
PROBUILD COMPANY LLC

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LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
2003 GMC SRA TC  
VIN = 1GDJC34123E211672  
Amount due on lien \$281.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
RENO FORKLIFT  
MEE 2 INC

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LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
2007 FORD F150 PK  
VIN = 1FTPW14V37FA23451  
Amount due on lien \$281.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
TED TIAGA & HEATHER SCHOCH

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COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2021 NEVI GN  
VIN = 1N9AH2417MD175128  
Amount due on lien \$1435.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
CHRISTOPHER & CARRIE KASEBERG

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COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2016 FORD XPD LL  
VIN = 1FMJK2AT4GEF57165  
Amount due on lien \$1435.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
JESSIE HAWKINS & JOHN RITTER  
WELLS FARGO AUTO

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LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
2003 FORD F550 TK  
VIN = 1FDWA56S63EC58437  
Amount due on lien \$116.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
LIGHT TRUCK PARTS

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LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
1999 FORD F550 TK  
VIN = 1FDAF56F4XED63938  
Amount due on lien \$281.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
TIDEWATER CONTRACTORS INC

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LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
2008 FORD F450 CB  
VIN = 1FDXX46Y28EB86620  
Amount due on lien \$116.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
LIGHT TRUCK SALES INC

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COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2004 SUBA LEGACY 4D  
VIN = 453BH675246008899  
Amount due on lien \$1455.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
JOHN KOCH & ELIZABETH ANKARBERG

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COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2015 KIA OPTIMA 4D  
VIN = 5XXGM4A77FG460513  
Amount due on lien \$1455.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
NATHAN & JANICE WAGNER  
CENTRAL WILLAMETTE COMMUNITY CU

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LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
2006 FORD 450 TK  
VIN = 3FRLL45226V385776  
Amount due on lien \$116.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
LIGHT TRUCK PARTS

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LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
2015 NISSAN SENTRA 4D  
VIN = 3N1AB7AP3F364479  
Amount due on lien \$281.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
ZAURE SHINETMIROVA

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LIGHT TRUCK PARTS OF SALEM INC  
2510 TURNER RD SALEM, OR  
2003 CHEV EXP VA  
VIN = 1GBFG15731183138  
Amount due on lien \$116.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
LIGHT TRUCK PARTS