



‘SECOND BATTLE FIELD’

Organizers seek support for Ukrainian farm families

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**
Capital Press

COLFAX, Wash. — Ukraine’s farms have become a “second battle field” in the war with Russia, according to a Ukrainian businessman who is working in the U.S. and Europe to build support for farm families in his homeland.

It’s harvest time in Ukraine, and farmers there are struggling with the lack of fuel and storage for their crops. But in many of the fields, Russian mines and unexploded rockets pose lethal dangers.

“Every week, there is one or two situations where a tractor or agricultural equipment explodes on the mines, even in the peaceful areas,” said Roman Grynshyn.

He is CEO of Travelite MICE and Travel Ukraine. The Kyiv-based company organizes a farmer-to-farmer program funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, or USAID. He organizes farm tours and brings in experts to speak with Ukrainian farmers about new agricultural technologies.

When the Russian Army invaded Ukraine, soldiers destroyed as much as they could, Grynshyn

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Rodrigo Abd/Associated Press

≈ **A soldier stands in the entrance of a farm destroyed by a Russian attack near Brovary, on the outskirts of Kyiv, Ukraine, on March 28.**

≈ **A farmworker climbs out of a crater caused by shelling in a field in Cherkaska Lozova, near Kharkiv, eastern Ukraine, on May 28.**

Bernat Armangué/Associated Press



Critics fear restrictions under new Oregon wildfire map

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Press

Oregon forestry officials are bracing for controversy after approving statewide hazard ratings that encompass up to 300,000 properties with an elevated risk of wildfires.

Many of those tracts are expected to face new defensible space and building code requirements under “wildland-urban interface” criteria recently enacted by the state’s Board of Forestry.

Critics anticipate the two regulatory actions will result in sweeping and unwork-

able restrictions for rural communities when a map of affected areas is released later this month.

Blowback from rural residents against the new requirements is expected by the state forestry officials due to objections they’ve encountered during the rule-making process.

“We have to recognize there will be people and organizations that will continue to push against this and attempt to embarrass the department and related agencies,” said Jim Kelly, the board’s chair, during a recent meeting. “It will enter into the governor’s race and all that. I think we all need to be prepared.”



Stayton Fire District

The Oregon Department of Forestry has approved mapping rules that critics fear will cause over-regulation of rural properties.

The Oregon Department of Forestry received roughly twice as many comments opposed to the map-

ping regime than in favor of it, mostly because people thought the wildland-urban interface was too expan-

sive, said Tim Holschbach, the agency’s fire prevention and policy manager.

The agency will send

out written notices to 250,000-300,000 landowners affected by the rules. They can appeal their classifications if they’re subject to regulation, he said. Periodic audits will review the effectiveness of the rules, which can continue to be modified.

As the rollout of the wildfire map gets underway, ODF realizes it will be in a “fish bowl” of public scrutiny and it expects that revisions will be necessary, said Mike Shaw, the agency’s fire chief.

“The agency’s work is not done. The work will continue through this year. We know we’re not going to be

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Stricter groundwater rules contemplated for Oregon

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Press

SALEM — Oregon water regulators want to impose stricter rules for drilling new irrigation wells next year to preserve groundwater levels and prevent over-pumping.

A preliminary analysis of available data suggests that little groundwater across the state is available for new allocations, said Ivan Gall, field services division administrator at the state’s Water Resources Department.

The goal is to create a policy that’s “simple and transparent” and also “protective” of groundwater and senior water rights holders, Gall said at the June 16 meeting of the state’s Water Resources Commission, which oversees the department.

The agency plans to hold public outreach workshops about the proposal this summer, following by a “rules advisory committee” to weigh in on potential changes.

Under this timeline, the commission could vote to

adopt the new regulations in early 2023.

“It’s a very large undertaking, when you look at the issues before us,” said Doug Woodcock, OWRD’s deputy director of water management.

The agency is on an “ambitious schedule” to revise the rules for permitting new wells, he said. It plans to later deal with other groundwater reforms, such as the rules for deepening existing wells.

“We’re really looking at the groundwater allocation piece and getting that

under control,” Woodcock said.

Depletion of groundwater has been a growing concern for several areas in Oregon, drawing increased scrutiny to how irrigation uses are regulated.

Traditionally, irrigators have been permitted to tap into aquifers as long as the wells didn’t immediately interfere with surface waters, according to OWRD.

The agency is now contemplating an approach that would deny permits for new wells where ground-

water is over-appropriated or where data is lacking.

Currently, new groundwater uses may be approved even if there’s insufficient information about aquifer appropriation.

Under the new regulation, wells would no longer be permitted simply because an area “cannot be determined to be over-appropriated.”

During the June 16 meeting, commission members urged OWRD officials to cease approving new wells

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