Business & Ag

SRS funding cut set to impact Oregon, local schools

By Brian Addison
Brian@TheBakerCountyPress.com

The end of funding through the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (SRS) and failure to pass an extension of the legislation will cost Oregon hundreds of millions of dollars, according to Oregon State University reports. Baker County alone stands to lose close to a million dollars per year with the termination of the SRS funding.

SRS funding originated with the passage of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993. At that time, a funding package was developed by Congress to compensate communities reliant upon the timber industry for economic survival after federal environmental regulations put an end to large-scale timber sales on federally owned lands within the states of Oregon, Washington, and California.

The original legislation providing the lifeline funding package expired in 2006 but was reauthorized through the year 2013.

The reauthorization was spearheaded by Senators Larry Craig (R-ID), Ron

Wyden (D-OR), and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA).

The reauthorization of the SRS Act expired in 2013 and there has yet to be a further reauthorization extending further the funding, and local communities are bracing for the economic impact.

In 2013, Baker County received close to \$800,000 for road department funding and another approximately \$100,000 in Title II funding.

The end of the SRS funding could have a significant economic impact across the state of Oregon.

"The Secure Rural Schools and Self-Determination Act provides funding to Oregon county government that directly or indirectly supports 3,500 jobs," according to a study conducted by Oregon State University.

In addition to the loss of 3,500 jobs, Oregon could experience a total output loss of \$350 million, and a value added cut equaling \$230 million, according to the report.

US Representative Greg Walden (R-OR), on December 9, 2014, released a statement addressing the failure of Congress to act on legislation to ensure economic stability to the once timber-reliant communities.

"I have worked hard with Reps. Peter DeFazio and Kurt Schrader on a bipartisan bill to reform federal forest policy. The House has twice passed the Restoring Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act (HR 1526), a bipartisan plan to grow jobs in the woods, improve forest health, and provide funding for important local services like schools and roads. It's unfortunate that Senate Democratic leaders failed to act on this bill or any meaningful reforms to forest policy that would have opened up discussions for a compromise.

"Speaker Boehner has pledged that the House will work with the new Republican majority in the Senate next year (2015) to send the president a longterm solution to provide certainty for rural forested communities and the people who live there. The Speaker has also pledged that the House will act to provide an extension to the Secure Rural Schools program in the first quarter of next year (2015).

"If the Senate would have acted on federal forest policy reform, it would have gone a long way towards providing a longterm solution to actively managing our forests to grow jobs and revenue. But I remain strongly supportive of getting the job done with a viable pay-for once and for all without political gimmickry. I will work with the relevant committees on this solution, and I'm confident we'll achieve a better and lasting solution under Republican leadership in the House and Senate," states Walden.

While there appears to be no quick fix to the loss of the SRS funding, Walden announced that another funding source dedicated to the forested communities, Payment in Lieu of Taxes, has received full funding this year.

"Funding for the PILT program is contained in this year's government funding agreement. Combined with funding in the National Defense Authorization Act passed by the House last week, PILT will be fully funded this year at \$442 million, a slight increase from last year.

"Although Oregon's exact share is yet to be determined, last year Oregon counties received \$17.6 million for essential local services," said Walden.

— WEEKLY HAY REPORT —

Friday, January 9, 2015 — Eastern Oregon

Prices trended generally steady compared to the same quality last report with increased demand from the dairies and continued light demand from the export market which continues to see very little trading with more stringent regulations coming from China. Trade activity was moderate with the holidays just ending, and inclement weather hindering some trade. Several producers have sold all that they plan to sell for this season.

(Tons/Price range/Avg.)
Alfalfa, Large Square / good
400 180.00-180.00 180.00
Alfalfa/Orchard Mix, Small Square / good
20 220.00-220.00 220.00

USDA Market News Service—AMS.USDA.gov

— CATTLE MARKET REPORT —

Wednesday, January 7, 2015 Vale, Oregon

Cattle sold through the auction: 575

Steer Calves

300-400# Bulk 292.00 - 364.00 Top 386.00 400-500# Bulk 283.00 - 329.00 Top 345.00 500-600# Bulk 243.00 - 298.00 Top 301.00

Heifer Calves

300-400# Bulk 263.00 - 314.00 Top 332.00 400-500# Bulk 257.00 - 295.00 Top 297.00 500-600# Bulk 254.00 - 271.00 Top 273.00

Yearling Steers

600-700# Bulk 232.00 - 245.00 Top 246.00 700-800# Bulk 203.00 - 225.00 Top 228.00 800-900# Bulk 179.00 - 198.00 Top 199.00 900-1,000# Bulk N/A Top N/A

Yearling Heifers

600-700# Bulk 219.00 - 232.00 Top 234.00 700-800# Bulk 197.00 - 200.00 Top 203.00 800-900# Bulk N/A Top N/A 900-1,000# Bulk N/A Top N/A

> Thin Shelly Cows 57.00 - 79.00 Butcher Cows 93.00 - 105.00 Butcher Bulls 105.00 - 122.00 Stock Cows 1575.00 - 1800.00

> > ProducersLivestock.com

Blue Mountain Forest Plan Revision

Continued from Page 1

"The Forest Service is open to suggestions from stakeholders," said Stadler.

John Creighton of Baker City and member of the forest access advocacy group Forest Access for All attended the meeting.

"The Forest Service received more than 1,000 comments and 95-percent were negative. They (the Forest Service) wanted to address that at the meeting and wanted to talk about how to get people involved," Creighton said.

"A majority of the people felt cautiously optimistic. Next, the Forest Service plans to go through the notes they took from the meeting and to formulate a concept for further engagement with the public," he added.

Bill Harvey, newly sworn in as chairman of the Baker County Board of Commissioners attended and had the opportunity to become acquainted with fellow commissioners from neighboring counties.

"There was no discussion on specific topics," said Harvey. "It was more to talk with those we disagree with and to share opposing ideas."

Harvey said that there were several opinions shared ranging from having the Forest Service taking more public input in formulating the final forest plan revision to those who believe the draft of the plan is fatally flawed and should be scrapped altogether.

Terry Drever-Gee attended the meeting representing mining interests as a member of the John Day-Snake Resource Advisory Committee.

The resource advisory committee works to provide input and to guidance on land managed by the Bureau of Land. Management.

Drever-Gee, a 20-year member of the John Day-Snake RAC spoke with optimism about the USFS forest plan revision process voicing high regard for Tom Montoya who was recently appointed Wallowa-Whitman National Forest supervisor.

"This is the first time since I've lived here that the Forest Service supervisor has been promoted from within the local office," she said. "He was so well respected in this area that he was promoted."

Drever-Gee mentioned three main areas of interest emerging from the meeting with forest health, economic viability, and access.

"We broke into smaller groups during the meeting and talked about how to proceed and what the process will be to engage more members of the pub-

lic. In the small groups we picked a theme and tried to figure out how to get the information out to more people. One of the messages we delivered was that the Forest Service needs to be more transparent and to build trust," she said.

"When we got there we were skeptical. When we left we were hopeful but still somewhat skeptical. This is totally a new process for them (Forest Service)—a new trail they are blazing that they don't want to do the plan revision by themselves," Drever-Gee said.

"The people from the Forest Service seemed to be listening," she added.

Field representative Kirby Garrett, from US Representative Greg Walden's (R-OR) La Grande office attended the meeting but declined comment.

— LOG PRICE REPORT —

Price per 1,000 board feet: Northeast Oregon

Delivered to Elgin

Doug Fir / Larch 6"+ \$370/m White Fir/Sp 6"+ \$380/m LPP 6"+ \$350/m

Delivered to La Grande

P. Pine 6-11" \$290/m 12-17" \$340/m 18-23" \$390/m 24'+ \$420/m

Delivered to Pilot Rock

12-17" \$390/m 18-23" \$440/m 24'+ \$480/m

Delivered pulp

\$28/ton to Elgin \$28/ton to La Grande Courtesy of Arvid Andersen, Andersen Forestry Consulting

Huntington man sentenced to 30 months in prison

Jeremy Mclean, age 44, of 590 2nd Road in Huntington was sentenced Tuesday to 30 months with the Oregon Department of Corrections.

Mclean was sentenced by Circuit Court Judge Greg Baxter.

Mclean pled guilty to one count of unlawful delivery of methamphetamine. He was also sentenced last December in Grant County to 30 months on a charge of delivery of

The Grant County and Baker County sentences will run consecutively for a total of 60 months in prison for Mclean. The case was investigated by the Baker County Narcotics team, which was able to utilize an undercover office, who purchased meth from Mclean in both counties.

Mclean was further sentenced to three years postprison supervision, which will occur following his five-year prison sentence

Mclean must also pay a \$500 fine and complete a drug and alcohol program as part of that post-prison supervision.

District Attorney Matt Shirtcliff praised the Narcotics Team for their involvement in the case.

Find us on Facebook! www.facebook.com/theBCPress



Michael Rushton, DPM

Podiatric Physician and Surgeon

Treatment and Surgery of the Foot and Ankle
In-grown Nails • Bunions • Warts • Gout • Corns & Callouses
Diabetic Foot Screening • Foot Odor • Athletes Foot
Treatment for pain in feet, shins, heels, knees, lower back.
Custom molded orthotics.

Dr. Rushton is a *Preferred Provider* for Lifewise and Blue Cross/Blue Shield and a Medicare participant.

Baker City 2830 10th Street • 524-0122 Wednesdays in La Grande 1002 Spring Ave Suite 1 541-963-3431

The doctor speaks Spanish– El doctor habla Espanŏl.

— Precious Metals Report —

Price per ounce, USD Gold: \$1,231.40 Silver: \$17.02 Platinum: \$1,239.50 Palladium: \$815.75

Palladium: \$815.7

AG COMMODITIES —

Bloomberg.com

Corn: \$385.75/bu/USD
Wheat: \$584.00/bu/USD
Soybeans: \$1004.25/bu/USD
Oats: \$293.25/bu/USD
Rough Rice: \$11.45/cwt/USD
Canola: \$450.30 CAD/mwt
Live Cattle: \$157.45/lb./USD
Feeder Cattle: \$210.53/lb./USD
Lean Hogs: \$75.20/lb./USD

Bloomberg.com