

Business & Ag

Cattlemen back new brand inspection fee

• NEW FEE TO FEND OFF SAGE-GROUSE IMPACT, WOLVES DISCUSSED

BY CARMELITA HOLLAND
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"I make a motion supporting the roll out of this bill," began Myron Miles, Oregon Cattlemen's Association (OCA) District Vice President at-large, April 16th, at a Baker County Livestock Association meeting in Richland, held at the Eagle Valley Grange's Community Hall. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

With this action the Oregon Cattlemen Association approved an assessment of one dollar on each head of cattle sold in five counties, Baker, Lake, Harney, Crook and Malheur, established as the sage-grouse's Critical Habitat Area in Oregon. This assessment is called the OCA Natural Resource Conservation Fee, or NRCF, and the assessment will be made at the point of brand inspections.

The NRCF is dependent upon passing a proposed sage grouse initiative being presented to the Oregon legislature.

The State Legislative Counsel has determined this assessment to be a tax.

The purpose of the NRCF is to raise funds for sage-grouse-related conservation projects.

"We have put in a lot of effort in developing a package to get ready to send to the legislature," said John O'Keefe, OCA President-elect, referring to the last three years of dedicated work on the sage grouse issue.

"What we are trying to do, is create a reason to keep the Federal government from listing the sage grouse as an endangered species," said O'Keefe. "This sage-grouse initiative is doing something on a scale that has never been done before."

The NRCF proposal has a Sunset of five years, after which it expires, if not revisited and renewed.

According to plans, collected revenue will be held by the Department of Agriculture, who will issue block grants to Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), which represent the county where

the cattle were raised. Administration fees charged by the Department of Agriculture will be 3 - 4%, and SWCD fees have been estimated at 12 - 14%

In this way, sage-grouse conservation projects will be funded for livestock producers in the five Critical Habitat counties, partly by the livestock producers themselves.

"We have a lot of support and need a lot more. We have possibilities of receiving funding from a number of sources," said O'Keefe, naming the Audubons who have a two million dollar fund they appear to be willing to share in half.

"Besides the assessment, which could raise as much as \$300,000 over a five-year period, there should be Federal money available for sage-grouse."

He also mentioned a possible wild bird seed fund designed for sage-grouse benefits.

Instream water rights were addressed by Chairman Jake Bingham.

The Chair reminded members that the Fish and Wildlife Department at State Level filed for Instream water rights in 1990.

Wolf Update.

Special guests at the OCA meeting were Brian Ratliff, Baker District Biologist, and Justin Primus, Assistant District Wildlife Biologist, who gave an update on the wolf situation in Baker County.

Ratliff reported there were seventy-seven wolves documented in Oregon at this time. Three packs in Baker County.

He said the Minam River pack was "over the ridge" from Baker County, and in the other direction is a John Day River pack.

"On March 26th, we got pictures of six wolves in McGraw. Two were pups. We have no idea where they are now.

"We are in Phase II. This is the transitional phase. What we learn in this Phase will determine whether wolves advance toward being delisted or not," said Ratliff.

The Commission is mandated by law to base the decision they make on biological information, a certain number of breeding pairs must remain a definite number of years, is part of this.

Any wolves east of



Carmelita Holland/The Baker County Press

OCA President-elect John O'Keefe (standing) and Jacob Bingham discussed the proposal \$1/head brand inspection fee last week in Richland.

Highways 395, 78 and 95 are no longer protected under Federal laws, but Oregon lands west of those highways are listed yet.

If a person lives east of those highways, and sees a wolf attacking, or just chasing livestock, or chasing a working dog on his/her property, or lands lawfully occupied, that person can legally shoot the wolf, providing the individual has not baited or otherwise attracted the wolf.

After shooting the wolf, one has 24 hours to report the incident. During that 24 hours the scene must be preserved and care taken to not remove or disturb the carcass of the wolf.

Ratliff said tracing the wolves, done by keeping track of signals sent from their collars reveals they travel great distances quickly.

One collared, lone wolf started at Umatilla, went into Idaho, came back, went through Medical Springs into Union County. He was hazed there so is now outside of Vale.

Last year, a female and three pups came through Medical Springs, and on through Look Out Mountain using the same route of earlier wolves. Two weeks later, a collared lone male wolf came through Medical Springs, through Look Out, went into Idaho, to Wyoming, using the same route.

An Imnaha wolf pack went to Summit Point, then Fish Lake. A wolf was located ranging high uphill of Eagle Creek and he stayed high. Ratliff said there has been considerable wolf activity in the area of Catherine Creek State Park and from all indications there may be a female there intending to den up to bear pups.

Ratliff said lone wolves are not much of a worry, but packs of wolves need watched.

A curious Pine Valley rancher asked questions about the collars put on the wolves.

Ratliff said each collar carries the gender, color and age of the wolf it is on. The batteries in the collars can last up to three years. How long they last depends upon how many times they are set to send a signal to a satellite they are directed to contact.

They may be set for twice a day, more frequently, or less. He said they seldom fall off the wolf, but are frequently chewed off by other wolves.

He was asked who pays for the wolf management and expenses.

Ratliff replied, "There is a Federal Wolf grant, and management funds come out of District money, Grande Ronde Watershed funds.

Ratliff said that as far as it is known, the wolves have not made it into the Elkhorn Mountains yet.

A rancher from the "West Wall" said the Imnaha pack was using hard there.

Another rancher asked how to identify wolf kills.

Ratliff said that elk is the wolf's favorite food. He said a Pine Valley wolf kill showed a few bruises behind the elk's shoulder, and canine scratches in the hide showed it was the work of a wolf.

"Wolves usually bite behind the shoulder, and they bite on an animal until it can't run anymore. They leave a long struggle trail. Time will erase the trail quickly, so it is most important to take action immediately to identify the kill," said Radcliff.

— WEEKLY HAY REPORT —

Friday, April 17, 2015 — Eastern Oregon

Prices trended generally steady compared to the same quality last week. Trade activity and demand slowed this week. The continued good weather in several areas of Oregon has slowed down demand, as pasture grasses are growing causing end users to be able to turn animals out on pasture rather than purchase and feed additional hay. Export hay business seems to slowly be picking up, however continued issues with few containers available and backup of containers needing to be loaded at the shipping ports continues to slow down the ability to export hay overseas. Most producers have sold all that they plan to sell for this season.

Alfalfa / Orchard Mix - Small Square/Premium, 50 tons, \$175 avg.

USDA Market News Service—AMS.USDA.gov

— CATTLE MARKET REPORT —

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Vale, Oregon

Cattle sold through the auction: 598

Steer Calves

300-400# Bulk 274.00 - 309.00 Top 312.50
400-500# Bulk 187.00 - 308.00 Top 310.00
500-600# Bulk 249.00 - 292.00 Top 295.00

Heifer Calves

300-400# Bulk 251.00 - 278.00 Top 293.00
400-500# Bulk 241.00 - 273.00 Top 287.50
500-600# Bulk 227.00 - 256.00 Top 261.50

Yearling Steers

600-700# Bulk 231.00 - 248.00 Top 257.50
700-800# Bulk N/A Top N/A
800-900# Bulk N/A Top N/A
900-1,000# Bulk N/A Top N/A

Yearling Heifers

600-700# Bulk 208.00 - 230.00 Top 232.50
700-800# Bulk 186.00 - 201.00 Top 205.00
800-900# Bulk 166.00 - 181.00 Top 189.50
900-1,000# Bulk N/A Top N/A

Thin Shelly Cows 78.00 - 91.00
Butcher Cows 92.00 - 106.00
Butcher Bulls 98.00 - 119.00
Stock Cows 650.00 - 1875.00
Younger Hfrts. 117.00 - 142.00
Pairs Yng. - N/A

ProducersLivestock.com
541-473-3136

— LOG PRICE REPORT —

Price per 1,000 board feet: Northeast Oregon

Doug Fir is \$415.00/mbf
White fir is \$365.00/mb
Ponderosa Pine is brought sold on diameter splits
6 to 11 inch dib \$300 to \$310/MBF
12 to 17 inch dib \$350 to \$375/MBF
18 to 23 inch dib \$400 to \$430/MBF
24 inch plus dib \$450 to \$500/MBF

DIB is diameter inside bark at small end of log.
MBF is thousand board feet lumber, net scale.
People interested in selling logs should call and get specific quotes from saw mills.

Courtesy of Arvid Andersen,
Andersen Forestry Consulting

— PRECIOUS METALS REPORT —

Price per ounce, USD

Gold: \$1200.50

Silver: \$15.96

Platinum: \$1,147.88

Palladium: \$771.25

Bloomberg.com

— AG COMMODITIES —

Corn: \$378.75/bu/USD
Wheat: \$500.00/bu/USD
Soybeans: \$976.75/bu/USD
Oats: \$263.00 bu/USD
Rough Rice: \$9.98/cwt/USD
Canola: \$453.00 CAD/mwt
Live Cattle: \$146.43/lb./USD
Feeder Cattle: \$212.65/lb./USD
Lean Hogs: \$77.60/lb./USD

Bloomberg.com

D&B holds grand re-opening

• NEW GUN COUNTER AMONG STORE'S UPDATES

BY MEGHAN ANDERSCH
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D&B Supply celebrated a "Grand Re-Opening" Event this past week, April 16th through 18th. The store has undergone a complete remodel (and it did stay open to customers throughout the project).

The remodel included a "major face lift" and the introduction of several new products throughout the store. These additions include a full line of equipment for shooting sports, camping and fishing gear, food processing equipment, and gas, wood, and pellet stoves.

D&B Supply has also added many miscellaneous items in departments throughout the store—too many to list per Blaine Ream, Operations Manager of D&B Supply. (Ream usually works out of Caldwell, Idaho, but was in town to assist with the Grand Re-Opening.)

Ream said, "There's a lot of new stuff, so come check it out, even if you've been here before. If you haven't been here before, you need to come see what we're about."

The clothing area was completely remodeled and rearranged and D&B Supply now carries the 5.11 tactical apparel line.

The kids' clothing offerings have been expanded, and the Baker City store is also now carrying Noble Outfitters equestrian riding



Kerry McQuisten/The Baker County Press

Greg Maddox is hard at work behind D&B's new gun counter.

D&B Supply celebrated the completion of the remodel with a three-day event Thursday through Saturday including giveaways all three days. Saturday giveaways featured a

Rhino gun safe, Springfield 9 mm pistol, and Bushnell Binoculars.

The Baker City D&B Supply is open Monday through Saturday 8 a.m.-7 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m.-5 p.m.