

Local

Metro affects eastern Oregon

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Poole says his father, “a child of the Depression” who lived in western Oregon, but owned a mining claim outside Sumpter, worked most of his life taking care of property for a living, and warned Poole as a teenager of what he foresaw as the “misapplication of the Oregon land use plan.”

His father’s words resonated with Poole years later when the Portland area’s Metropolitan Service District or “Metro” authorized Tri-Met to “drop the end of the light rail into the neighborhood with almost no input from citizens. The citizens said ‘no thanks,’” Poole said.

The project was stopped, but Metro and Trimet continued to impose the \$1.5 billion project on the community. Poole said he eventually decided to be “the first person to stand up and not go away.”

In 2011 and 2012, Poole was one of the forces behind successful signature drives for initiatives that now require a vote of the citizens before implementation of urban renewal projects or light rail lines.

Poole and his associates are hoping to collect 88,000 signatures by July of 2016 to place “An Act to return land use authority to the counties and cities in Oregon” on the ballot in November of 2016.

The initiative would limit the reach of metropolitan service districts, as well as the adoption of regional plans based upon them. The group stresses that the initiative would not change land use laws, per se, but would protect those adopted locally rather than allowing any Metro to duplicate those laws unnecessarily and withhold badly needed funds for noncompliance.

“It’s become a self-feeding machine,” said Poole. In Portland alone, 25% of state taxes from residents in that area are funneled to the Metro—the maximum state allowance under the law. Metro operates on nearly a \$500 million budget.

Of concern to Poole are the sweeping long-range land use plans Portland Metro has formed such as Metro 2040, which was essentially copied by Bend, which then formed Bend 2030 under the direction of embattled former gubernatorial girlfriend Cylvia Hayes.

Based on that same Portland Metro model, and with the support of environmental groups such as 1,000 Friends of Oregon, Kitzhaber set up 11 planning districts across the state under the name “Regional Solutions.”

Baker, Union and Wallowa Counties are lumped together as the “Northeast Region.”

Neighboring Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, and Wheeler Counties are the “Greater Eastern Region.” Regional Solutions is the Governor’s “approach to community and economic development,” established by executive order and implemented by a subsequent House Bill.

“Metro can get its tentacles into rural areas through Regional Solutions,” said Poole.

Primary Priorities, according to the Governor’s office, for the Northeast Region are:

- Increased Productivity from Federal Forest Lands
- Funding for two NEPA teams per forest and additional implementation teams.

• Accelerated restoration strategy for dry forests.

• Skilled Workforce Availability

• Increase availability of training/certification programs.

• Increase vocational/career technical education availability (Eastern Promise as a delivery model).

• Address interstate certification reciprocity issues.

• Integrate with Coordinated Care Organizations and Early Learning Councils.

• Available infrastructure to serve industrial sites

• Rail spur to Baum Industrial Park.

• Rail switch at Elkhorn Industrial Park.

• Sewer/water extension to Joseph Industrial Park.

• Marketable Industrial Land

• Funding and technical assistance to ensure a supply of marketable industrial lands

• Value-Added Natural Resource Utilization

• Forest restoration infrastructure

• Agricultural product processing

• Mining/metals extraction and processing

• Support Regional Vertical Integration Opportunities

• Wood products

• RV manufacturing

Secondary Priorities:

• Regional Business Recruitment Marketing Strategy

• Website development

• Investigate air commerce opportunities

• USFS 39 Road

• Funding for repair and maintenance

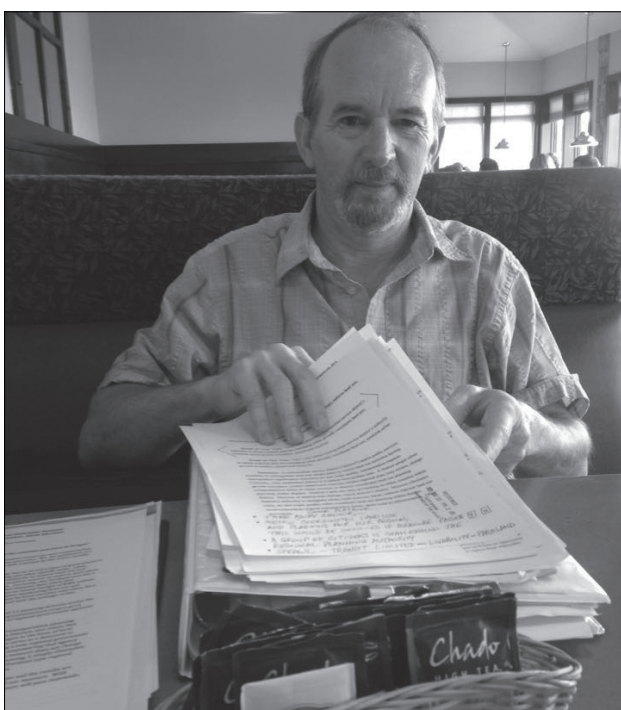
• Entrepreneurial Development

• Access to capital

• Incubator feasibility and operation analysis (Baker and Union counties)

• Business Succession/Transition to Next Generation

“Do we want our tax



Kerry McQuisten / The Baker County Press

Clackamas County’s Les Poole toured most of central and eastern Oregon this past week, gathering signatures for an upcoming ballot initiative.

dollars funding a machine with a terrible track record?” asked Poole.

The list of taxpayer-funded projects currently underway in eastern Oregon due to Regional Solutions are:

• Bates Pond (OC):

Determining whether a collaborative process will be feasible to resolve issues regarding fish passage for threatened steelhead and bull trout populations located in Bates State Park in the Blue Mountains.

Beaty Butte Grazing Association (OC): Exploring collaborative approaches to resolving five issues including: the potential listing of the greater sage-grouse, livestock grazing, wild horses, energy development, and wilderness study areas/special designations.

• BLM Burns District Wildfire Workgroup (OC):

Discuss opportunities for increased collaboration and improved communication to build fire resiliency in the district including addressing issues related to prevention, suppression, and restoration.

• Charter Ranger District (OSN): Potential co-location of a ranger district and school in eastern Oregon, with a focus on maintaining historic properties and providing educational opportunities for local community members.

• Harney Basin Wetlands Initiative (OC): Addressing challenges related to invasive carp, improving migratory bird habitat, and preserving traditional agricultural practices in the Harney Basin.

• SageCon (OS & OC): Working to pull together an “all lands, all threats” approach to sage grouse conservation to both address USFWS’s sage grouse listing decision in 2015 and support community sustainability in central and eastern Oregon into the future.

“The policies created in the Portland bubble by people who don’t know what goes on in Baker City are bound to be flawed,” said Poole.

Last weekend, Poole spent time at the Crook County Fair, then stopped in Grant County, where he said ranchers in particular were interested in his petition. For example, construction, ranching and mining operations in various eastern Oregon counties, including Baker, require a 15’ stream buffer in many situations.

However, Portland Metro’s plan requires a flat 50 buffer, with an increase of 200’ being discussed, which would be promoted through Regional Solutions statewide.

This 200’ of unusable land on either side of a stream, including even the smallest of streams according to Poole, could have serious financial impact on ranchers, both in terms of being able to utilize their own land, and in other areas such as the expense of replacing fence.

“The financial impacts of overbearing land use regulations and imposing one-size-fits-all plans are unacceptable,” Poole said.

Reads the chief petitioner’s web site, “The purpose of this measure is to remove land use and transportation planning authority from existing and future Metropolitan Service Districts and return that authority to the Citizens in the counties and cities of Oregon in the form of local control.”

Those interested in the petition can view its full legal text or sign online at www.local-control.com. Poole is available via email at elpee5440@gmail.com.

“If we don’t stem the tide of giving away our control,” said Poole, “our children will not forgive us.”

Sumpter shakeup

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Oakley’s response reads, “I chaired the work on an Employee handbook to approval in Jan. 2015. Chaired locating and reading water meters. Shared a list of items, we need to be working on as a team, never put on agenda. Water and sewer rates, we are keeping up but not adding anything extra for an emergency. Not against recording COUNCIL MEETINGS, against some citizens recording private conversations of citizens before meeting starts, ORS 165-540 and ORS 165-543 illegal if you are not a part of the conversation. Was not on council when I bought a shed to turn into a cabin got my zoning permit from the city and building, electrical Plumbing and mechanical from county and was approved by Gary Bood a shed with a porch, Mr. Bood thought I over did porch no red tag ready to volunteer for my seat on council?”

The Chief Petitioner to recall Woolf is Donald McKinnon. His statement in demand of recall states noncompliance with public purchasing law, little regard for public meeting laws and administration of City staff, contributing to the issues at stake in the current lawsuit, and participating in an illegal meeting trying to take over the Mayor’s powers.

Woolf’s statement in defense states, “I believe there’s a place for at least some of the attitude of the past. I believe there’s a place for a bit of continuity from one council to the next. I believe you should keep me on Sumpter City Council. There are issues with the sewer system that DEQ and issues with the water system that OHA want the City to address. It seems like those issues have been put on a back burner, though. I’d like to make sure we address them so the toilets keep flushing and the water Keeps coming out of the tap. Our volunteer fire department is in the best shape it’s ever been in, both with equipment and training. The mutual aid agreements and relationship amongst the valley’s fire fighters an emergency personnel is phenomenal. We benefit from safer homes and from lower insurance premiums. This is a development of the recent past I’d like us to keep.

Volunteer Park was built with a total of over \$80,000 of donated labor, equipment use, and materials. This was the Youngs and the Clarkes and an awful lot of you, too. This community has proven repeatedly that together we create wonders, restoring a narrow-gauge steam railroad and preserving a gold dredge, running our museums, keeping our library open, looking after neighbors, and so much more. I know we’ll get beyond this, and I wanted to be a part of what we all accomplish next.”

Thompson gave her resignation at Tuesday night’s City Council meeting. She stated she did not resign due to the recall petition and explained she has been spending a lot of time out of the City limits and will be spending more time out of the limits, so is resigning for that reason. She thanked everyone and announced that she did write a letter, for anyone interested. Her letter states in part, “This decision is not a result of the recall petition that has been filed against me, although the actions of Tim Peters, Melissa Findley and Don McKinnon have made this decision easier. I have given this a lot of thought and realize that it is time to step down.” She also encouraged, “I would ask all of you to give a great deal of thought before voting for any recall petition ... Recall is a drastic step and a lot of thought should be given before voting.”

Meanwhile, ballots for the recall election of the mayor were mailed out August 6. Carpenter said some ballots have already been returned. Polls close at 8 p.m. on the 25th, and Carpenter hopes to announce the results at 8 p.m. Results will become official 14 days after that

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Sinkhole to be repaired

The sinkhole on Anthony Lakes Highway (Forest Service Road 73) near the crossing of Antone Creek will receive final repairs on Monday August 17 through Thursday August 20.

Forest Service Road 73 will be closed during repairs beginning August 17 through August 20 and there will be no through traffic. The sinkhole is located on a narrow section of road and the undercutting from Antone Creek will prevent crews from piloting traffic around the construction site.

During construction, Anthony Lakes and the surrounding areas will remain accessible from Sumpter on Forest Road 73, from Ukiah on Forest Road 52 and from La Grande on Forest Road 51. The estimated completion date is Thursday morning August 20.

An alternate route around the construction area is available on Forest Service Road 7312 from Pilcher Creek Reservoir. This is a two lane gravel road recommended for high clearance vehicles.

Pioneer Days held after fire

BY EILEEN DRIVER

Eileen@TheBakerCountyPress.com

Huntington’s Pioneer Days has been filled with great music, entertainment and fun for 16 years and this year was no exception despite the Lime Hill fire scare days before.

The Chamber of Commerce, who sponsors the event, always tries to add something new each year and this years addition, a 19-foot-tall 25 foot long

waterslide, that was added to the Kid’s Water Park to make it fun for the whole family was a hit with young and old alike and a great way to cool off on our hot August days.

Lion’s Club park was filled with vendors selling handmade jewelry, arrowheads, dreamcatchers, knives and crocheted items. Scentsy made an appearance and good used items were also available in the flea market area gi-

ing visitors a good variety of goods. On the food side Indian flatbed and Indian tacos could be found as well as burgers, hot dogs, nachos and fries.

Entertainment included country music by the great local bands, Friends, Country Classics, Banned From Nashville, Sharon & Dick and Gospel music by the Sanctuary Cowboy Church. Cowboy Poets, Indian Dancers, Flint Knapping by Cecil Coons,

and strolling Pioneers were enjoyed by all. The Huntington Historical Museum, the Old Caboose in the Park and The Tyner Family Traveling Museum were available and learning about the past and how things were done during the real Pioneer times. The Huntington Historical Society’s Dime Toss Booth and the Train Ride provided by Snake River Garage were also popular ways to have some fun.

Concert ahead

The Baker Community Orchestra will hold its Summer Concert Friday, August 21 at 6:00 p.m. at the Lions Picnic Shelter in Geiser-Pollman Park in Baker City. There is no admission and all are welcome.

The orchestra, under the direction of Kelly Brickman, will perform a mix of classical, marches, as well as original compositions. Bring a blanket, or your lawn chairs, perhaps a picnic dinner and enjoy some music.

The Baker Community Orchestra is made up of volunteer members with a passion for making music, and open to any community member who play a band or orchestra instrument. There is no audition requirement. For information contact Brian Watt at 541-523-4662.