

BUSINESS: 10th Street business owners gather for roundtable meeting . **PAGE 3**



PHOTO: Haines students get surprise visit from Smokey during field trip. **PAGE 12**



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Elkhorns East Face project: 'all hands, all lands' approach

BY BRIAN ADDISON
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The East Face of the Elkhorn Mountains Project is a collaborative effort by the United States Forest Service (USFS), Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), the Natural Resources Conservation District (NRCS), and private land owners.

The East Face project is one of 13 projects across the nation drawing \$2.6 million from the federal

funds to reduce the threat of wildfire, protect water quality in the Baker City and La Grande watersheds, and to improve habitat for several species defined in federal management reports as "at risk."

The USFS portion of the East Face project currently sits in the 30-day public comment period on the agency's East Face Vegetation Management Project Environmental Assessment (EA) document. The EA analyzes the activities proposed on more than 47,000

acres of USFS and Bureau of Land Management managed lands and contains five alternatives.

"Collaborative efforts not only with ODF and NRCS but also the Willowa-Whitman Forest Collaborative group have ensured that treatments proposed in the East Face project area have been closely coordinated with the fuel reduction and vegetation management activities occurring or planned to occur on adjacent private and state lands," said

Tom Montoya, Willowa-Whitman National Forest supervisor. "This effort has truly made this project an integral part of the 'all hands, all lands' National Cohesive Wildfire Strategy principle."

The five alternatives documented within the EA contain a range of options from which the USFS may choose for the project.

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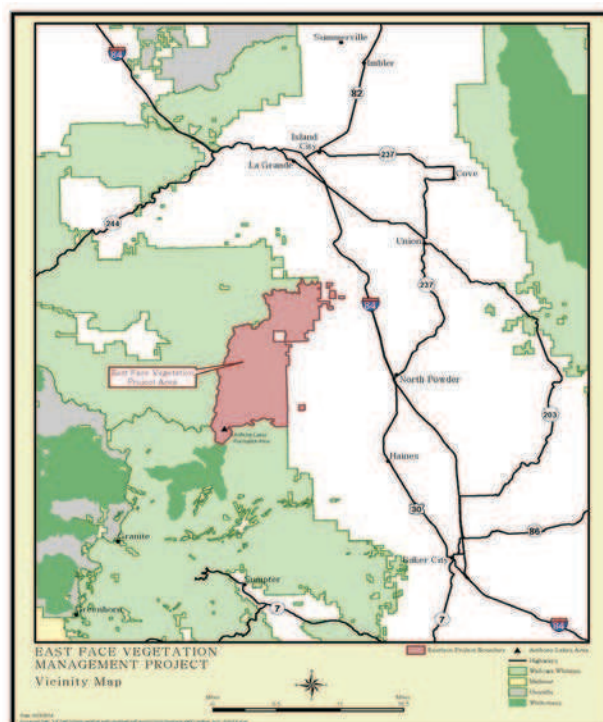


Photo Courtesy of the USFS.

This map shows the East Face designated project area.

Bus driver shortage



Todd Arriola / The Baker County Press

L-R: Debra Byrant (currently in training from John Day), Shanna Golden, Linda Ruby, Rachell Lemmon, Wendee Morrissey and Nathan Osborn are among the bus driving staff currently working at 5J.

• BUS DRIVERS IN SHORT SUPPLY IN OREGON AND 5J, EVENTS AFFECTED

BY TODD ARRIOLA
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Baker School District 5J Transportation Supervisor Wayne Paxton and Dispatcher/Bus Driver Nathan Osborn both have formed a singular opinion about the number of available extra bus drivers: There aren't any.

Paxton said, "I'm going to say, at least, the last four or five years—it's been pretty tough. We've been getting by, but it's getting tougher and tougher."

Paxton spoke about the already stretched-thin supply of drivers for the District. He explained that it's not just a local issue, but statewide, there's a shortage.

Attempted recruitment efforts for the positions have largely gone unanswered, Paxton said, including listings at the Oregon Employment Department, posts on social media, and printed advertisements in local newspapers.

Osborn said, "There's no incentive program. There's no reason for somebody to come work five hours a day, for a little over \$14 an hour, with no benefits."

He added, "And, if they do have benefits, they're very minimal. Or, for us, for instance, they're pro-rated on our insurance."

He explained that only 18 to 20 hours of work a week—which some drivers log—translates to paying for



Todd Arriola / The Baker County Press

Nathan Osborn and Wayne Paxton.

a significant percentage of health insurance costs out-of-pocket.

SEE BUS DRIVERS PAGE 5

Dog pack attacks, kills alpaca



Submitted Photo.

Lise Madson's alpaca, Amaretto, was attacked by three pitbulls Sunday evening near her Sparta home.

• ATTACK OCCURRED 100 FEET FROM OWNER'S FRONT DOOR

BY KERRY McQUISTEN
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Around 5:45 p.m. last Sunday is when Lise Madson of Sparta was alerted to a disturbance outside her home by the bark of her standard poodle.

SEE ALPACA DEATH PAGE 5

Sandy Lewis appointed to City Council

• CITY MANAGER KEE TO RETIRE, GRAFFITI ORDINANCE REVIEWED

BY GINA K. SWARTZ
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Tuesday evening was a busy night at City Hall. Council began the evening with an executive session addressing concerns over the water/sewer rates and residual effects after settlement of the Langrell lawsuit. After a short break Mayor Mosier called to order the regular public meeting at promptly 7:00 p.m.

SEE CITY COUNCIL PAGE 10

	Friday	Sunny. Clear skies and warm temperatures. High near 80. Partly cloudy and mild, lows in the mid 40s at night.
	Saturday	Partly sunny with a chance for showers and maybe a stray thunderstorm. Highs in the low 70s, chance of precipitation is 40%.
	Sunday	Partly cloudy with a chance for showers. Highs in the mid 60s, chance of precipitation is 30%. Partial clearing at night. Lows near 40.

Your weekend weather forecast for Baker County.



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