

Outdoor Rec / Sports

Regional swim meet results



Submitted Photo.

Jozie Ramos.

SUBMITTED BY NOEL SCOTT

Baker swimmers Jozie Ramos (BST) and Riana Scott (LGSC) competed in the Northwest Age Group Regional Championship swim meet on March 10-13 in Federal Way, WA.

This highly competitive meet required qualifying

times.

There were over 1000 athletes entered from OR, WA, ID, MT, WY, HI and AK. Below are the results of the events that both girls entered, time trials not included.

They both swam personal best times and competed very well.

Results:



Submitted Photo.

Riana Scott.

Girls 10&U 50 Yard Free 11 28.85 Ramos, Jozie

Girls 10&U 100 Yard Free 16 1:04.13 Ramos, Jozie

Girls 10&U 200 Yard Free 15 2:21.03 Ramos, Jozie

Girls 10&U 50 Yard Breast 30 39.60 Ramos, Jozie

Girls 10&U 100 Yard Breast 32 1:27.21 Ramos, Jozie

Girls 14 200 Yard Breast 20 2:33.80 Scott, Riana

The next meet for both teams will be a home meet in Baker City on May 7 and 8 at Sam-O Pool. Come out and support your local swimmers!

Winter Special Olympics games start with success



Submitted Photo.

Nick Mendiguren of La Grande.

Wandering into the weeds ...



THE OUTDOOR COLUMN
By Todd Arriola

Earlier this month, Baker County Commission Chair Bill Harvey, Commissioners Mark Bennett and Tim Kerns, Baker County Weed Supervisor Arnie Grammon, and Forest Access For All (FAFA) President Tork Ballard brought up the topic of the unresolved, rocky partnership between the Tri-County Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA), and Baker County.

Highlights from the CWMA, of the 2015 season, includes: 195 net acres of rush skeletonweed were treated, and another 65,000 acres were surveyed, outside of Halfway, and Richland; nearly 50 net acres of noxious weeds were treated on BLM-managed land, in Baker County; one net acre (very low density) of leafy spurge was treated, and another 33,000 acres were surveyed, in Holman Creek; 24 net acres of perennial pepperweed were treated, near Baker City; and the CWMA assisted the United States Forest Service (USFS) in Hells Canyon-area rush skeletonweed treatments.

Planned CWMA projects for the 2016 season includes: continuing to treat rush skeletonweed outside of Halfway, to finish the 2015 season progress; surveying Holman Creek for leafy spurge outlying infestations; working with the BLM to treat smaller noxious weed infestations around the county; beginning work on CWMA's sage grouse habitat restoration project, which includes treatment of medusahead monocultures, and seeding of competitive, native species, favored by the sage grouse; administering noxious-weed treatment on BLM-managed land, in areas that were burned in the Lime Hill, and Windy Ridge wildfires last summer; and continuing to assist the USFS with rush skeletonweed treatments.

in the Hells Canyon area.

On June 10th of last year, the Board of Commissioners held a work session that included CWMA Director Mark Lincoln, Grammon, Wallowa County Weed Supervisor Allen Schnetzky, and

BLM Weed Specialist Erin McConnell, for a discussion regarding goals and objectives of the CWMA, projects and funding. The CWMA covers Baker, Union, and Wallowa Counties.

Lincoln presented details about the CWMA's mission (at the time): "Improve effectiveness of the current noxious weed programs in Baker, Union, and Wallowa Counties; identify and obtain traditional, and non-traditional funding sources for weed programs; provide public awareness/education as to the serious nature of the problem, and educate/inform the public on the legal obligations, identification, and control of noxious weeds; and encourage cooperation, and coordination between jurisdictions, agencies, land managers, and private landowners."

Currently, that mission is: "The purpose of the Tri-County Cooperative Weed Management Area is to facilitate cooperation among all land managers and landowners to manage a common problem with noxious weeds. Our mission being to serve as responsible stewards of the land and resources in the state of Oregon by protecting and preserving all lands and resources in the tri-county area from the degrading impact of exotic, invasive noxious weeds."

Lincoln also provided details about the CWMA projects, noting that \$146,200 was paid to contractors for projects completed in Baker County in 2014; \$64,000 to contractors in Union County; and \$10,000 to contractors in Wallowa County. The projected total funds at the time for 2015 Baker County projects was \$262,097.43, most of which was set aside for Rush Skeleton treatment sites in the Hells Canyon area.

Following this discussion, Bennett voiced concerns about lack of specific details about funding, CWMA's coordination with the Counties, and staffing locations (the CWMA is based in La Grande), since a majority of the funding spent, and work performed, is in Baker County. Grammon echoed Bennett's sentiments, adding that there was a lack of communication between the CWMA and Grammon, a lack of coordination, and a lack of prioritizing weed control areas effectively.

The Board then requested more details regarding expenditures, followed by a disagreement between Grammon and Lincoln.

On Wednesday September 9th, the Board held another work session, with Grammon present, once again voicing his concerns about the lack of clarity in the CWMA budget, and with billing issues between the CWMA, and Baker County. Among other documents, Grammon provided the Board with the Articles of Agreement And Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) of the CWMA. The Board voiced its confusion with the CWMA budget, and Kerns, a Baker County Weed Board member, suggested holding another work session to further discuss the topic, questioning whether partnership with the CWMA was even beneficial to the County.

On September 23rd, Grammon discussed weed topics during a meeting of the Baker County Natural Resources Advisory Committee (BCNRAC), and cited ongoing issues with the CWMA. "There have been some bumps in the road recently, and you know about them, and what I would like to see in the future is better communication, as it relates to Tri-County, and federal agencies. It hasn't been very good recently, with federal agencies dealing with noxious weeds...What I'd like to see is more coordination, and cooperation with local Counties, and right now, it's minimal."

Fast forward to the regular Commission session, Wednesday, March 2nd, and it appears that issues between the CWMA, and the County are still in need of a remedy. Harvey spoke about attending the local Baker County Weed Board meeting (they're held on the fourth Tuesday of each month), and he said, "We

still have not dealt with the situation with Tri-County at all, because, we never really got, in my opinion, satisfactory information back, in regard to budgets, expenditures...We tried many times to get the gentlemen to give us something we can actually understand, and I have not gotten to that point...Since 80% of the budget they get comes from Baker County resources, or Baker County lands, why would we not entertain the thought of moving Tri-County back to Baker..?"

Harvey explained that the CWMA used to be headquartered in Baker County, including the Director, other staff, and spray applicators, but, now, there is no longer a CWMA presence, including any applicators hired locally, though, the majority of a \$1 million budget this year is spent on projects within Baker County.

Bennett said, "I agree... We need someone in Baker...The majority of money is spent in Baker County. The majority of the money was raised, based on the strength of issues in Baker County..." Bennett spoke with Grammon about the issue the day before, he said, and Bennett thinks there also should be active recruitment for spray applicators in the County. He mentioned inviting representatives of the CWMA, and Board of Commissioners of Union, and Wallowa Counties, for a Commission work session.

Kerns said, "We are not happy... I just don't see how they can have people travel from La Grande, and do an efficient job."

Ballard said, "I have a hard time understanding how this ever got away from us in the first place." Bennett explained that there were opportunities to receive more in funding during the late 90s, if there were a "regional goal approach" to weed programs, resulting in the creation of the operational entity of the CWMA. However, he said, though the CWMA Director, and staff of the CWMA were originally located in Baker County, there had been a change in staffing, and the CWMA was relocated to La Grande, the result being a redundancy with weed program entities associated with the County.

"Now, we need to bring it back home ..." Bennett said.



Submitted Photo.

Mandi Durfee from Elgin.

SUBMITTED BY STEPHANIE TWEIT

Last weekend, March 5-7th, started the Winter Olympic Games at Mt. Bachelor and our Local Anthony Lakes. The team, composed of Baker and Union counties, had been practicing for nine weeks and were ready to compete.

Our team practices more than most because of our wonderful mountain and great coaches who commit to each week. The competition ended with a ton of medals and someone said the bus was going to be too heavy to return.

Here are the results:

Baker County:
Jennifer Glerup 1st in the 50 meter xc ski, 3rd in the 100 xc ski; Jamie McLaughry 3rd in the 3 k xc ski, 1st in the 1k, 1st in the 1k relay with union county; Emily Moe 2nd in the 100 meter snowshoe, 5th in the 50 meter snowshoe.

Union County:
Snowshoes Dani Thorne gold in the 50 meter and 100 meter races, Cross country Jason Franks gold 500 meter gold 100 meter race, Joey Gross gold 500 meter race, silver 100 meter race, Alex Koiv gold 100 meter race silver 500 meter race, Nick Mendiguren gold in 3 races 1K, 500 meter and the 1K relay, Remy Spangler 3 gold 3K was a tie and the 5K won by .06 sec. and the 1K relay, Braden Trice Gold 1K relay, bronze in both the 1K and 500 meter race, Alpine/Downhill skiers Mandi Durfee gold in the Super G and Giant Slalom, silver in the slalom, Alex Weissenfluh gold in the Super G and silver in the Giant Slalom and Slalom,

Any athlete who revives a gold medal will get a chance to have their name put in for Special Olympics World Games to be held in Austria in 2017.

The state chooses two athletes to compete in the World games in 2017 in Austria, one male and one female.

Guess what? They both came from our team! Downhill skier, Mandi Durfee received two golds and one Silver and will go and Nick Mendiguren earned three gold medals and will go in cross country. As coaches, we are extremely proud of all our athletes and the passion they have to enjoy and compete. Bryan Tweit has coached for 23 years and runs the state games downhill portion and I have coached locally for 13 years.

Our biggest thank you is to Anthony Lakes, local fire and police departments for fundraising for us and fans!

The Knights of Columbus send us monthly checks and we received a Leo Grant as well as private donations.

Our next fundraiser is in May with Tip-A-Cop at Barley Browns.

Please come help support our local athletes. Donations can be sent to P.O. Box 508 Baker City Chapter 511.