

Outdoor Rec / Local

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BMFPR

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He said, in selecting priorities, in addressing Baker County’s NRP, that the County would like the NRP to inform federal agency planning. He listed goals, and objectives pertinent to the Forest Plans, including: increasing timber harvest on National Forest System lands, in order to improve forest health, reduce wildfire risk, and improve the economy; maintaining, or improving water quantity, and quality; providing grazing permits with satisfactory grazing land, and forage, and ensuring that any restrictions for ESA species are well-grounded in cause and effect relationships, between grazing, and the species; managing ESA-listed species, according to the ESA statute; providing opportunities for mineral exploration, and recovery; reducing the risk of damage to private lands from wildlife, by encouraging federal agencies to provide habitat that these species prefer, over private lands; and maintaining motorized vehicle access for all public lands, and roads. During this portion of the presentation, Montoya expressed an opinion, citing science, about the claimed impacts the numbers of open roads have, on elk security (and wildlife, in general), and Harvey voiced disagreement.

Montoya stated some upcoming opportunities, he said, to continue Baker County and USFS cooperation, and coordination: the BMFPR team will continue to review, and develop responses to Baker County’s 2014 formal comment letter, and Baker County’s 2015 NRP, and other policies pertinent to the Forest Plan; and the USFS would like to schedule follow-up meetings, to discuss the results of its review, and potential next steps for the Forest Plan.

Upon its conclusion, Harvey explained that he and the other Commissioners would address points made during the presentation, and attendees would be given the chance to do the same afterward (though heated at times, the Commissioners expressed

appreciation for the USFS representatives’ attendance at the meeting, and remained civil, explaining that criticism wasn’t necessarily directed solely at them, considering some issues were out of their direct control).

Bennett was given the floor first, and he voiced concerns about the lack of a flexible response to bug infestation, and Montoya said that, under the U.S. Farm Bill, the USFS is able to implement a project, in an emergency situation, in areas under 3,000 acres, under a CE (categorical exclusion).

Bennett said that the County will be monitoring timber production versus timber treatment, to ensure the process is balanced, and he asked Montoya when a ROD is expected. Montoya said that the Final EIS is expected this fall, with the ROD possibly out next April, depending on different factors, such as ESA consultation. Bennett said that some major documents seemed to have arrived to the County during holidays often, which he said seems suspect, considering the short amount of time in which to respond during the commenting period, though he emphasized that this is not necessarily criticism of the USFS.

Bennett also, among other concerns, spoke about designated roadless areas, which are basically “de facto wilderness areas” to him, and Montoya said that the Plan will not address those, because the USFS does not have the authority to adjust the boundary lines, though there are treatments which can be implemented within the areas. Montoya said that the USFS can implement treatment (for example, cut some smaller diameter trees) in the roadless areas (options already available to the USFS, without the Plan), but the timber from that treatment can’t be sold.

Kerns said he’s concerned about the watersheds in general, regarding the roadless areas near them, not receiving treatment. He brought up the subject of elk, and he said that they don’t need the amount of space for protection that the State implies they do, and that more roads should be open, giving people

more recreational opportunities. Kerns said that that recreation causes minimal impacts.

He said that the County, and the USFS seem to be in agreement on what needs to be done in order to treat the National Forests, but that Kerns is concerned about funding, and that the Plan falls short of that treatment goal. He said he understands that funding is out of Montoya’s control, and Montoya agreed with Kerns regarding funding issues, but Montoya is pleased that the State has provided some funds, for the East Face restoration project.

Harvey began discussing his concerns, by stating that the Plan would limit the ability of the community to hunt, fish, recreate, etc., because of the road restrictions, or the removal of the roads for public use. He noted the terms “cooperation” and “coordination,” in Montoya’s presentation, and he said there are differences between the two, as he explained them (Harvey has emphasized the County’s role, as a coordinating agency, maintaining existing rights, and as a partner to other agencies).

He said that there used to be mills, and the USFS realized the need to remove timber, but with the Plan, there is no balance, with regard to timber production, and timber removal. Harvey listed some issues, with the restrictions on what areas are off-limits, as far as removing timber, which includes: areas with slopes of 34% or more grade; riparian areas; study areas; and roadless areas, resulting in a very small percentage of the total area, which can be harvested. He spoke about the devastating wildfires last summer, which he said can’t be the only way timber is allowed to be removed—by burning it out.

Harvey said he didn’t feel like the USFS considered seriously the comments from the County, and the policies and procedures of the County are not a “wish list,” but are intended to be implemented. He said there’s no more land left in the County which should be designated as a wilderness area, and the County was allowed no say on roadless area designations (Harvey pointed

out that, contrary to what was stated, the USFS can build temporary roads in wilderness areas, in order to address issues). He said that he didn’t understand why the County would only be given a 60-day comment period, when the whole process has taken many years. He said that implementation of the timetable of the Plan isn’t a realistic goal, and that the USFS has to consult with too many outside agencies, which creates major issues for the County, since the focus should be local, with coordination.

Harvey and Montoya disagreed about whether the USFS had been working with the County over the years to manage National Forest lands, and Harvey stressed coordination, and public input, and he praised the Baker County NRAC for its efforts regarding the NRP, which he said was a difficult process.

Attendees providing comments and asking questions included Chase, Long, Williams, Andersen, the Ballards, Danser, and the Creightons.

Among some of the comments made, were the following: Chase said, regarding the negative effects of roads on wildlife, that he doesn’t believe there is a connection there, as he relayed a hunting story.

Williams said that the USFS isn’t listening to reason; it’s listening to politics, and not standing up to Congress to let the USFS to do its job, and the health of the National Forests is abysmal. Montoya said that, legally, the USFS can’t lobby the U.S. Congress, but that the public can.

Ramona commented about the need for the USFS to allow more public input opportunities, and to take the public seriously, and John praised the Commissioners for what they said during the meeting, that he’s proud of them, and that the USFS representatives need to start listening to members of the County.

Tork asked that, if the term “designated routes” would be removed from the Plan, what would replace it, and Stadler said that the new language would be in compliance with the Travel Management Rule.

return of Albertsons, which happened independently of efforts from his office, would bring back about 50 jobs to Baker City.

Rick Taylor, Parks and Rec Advisory Board Chair suggested letting groups adopt sections of the Leo Adler Pathway primarily for litter pickup reasons.

Warner, Jr. announced that the grant application to complete the Court Plaza project had been denied.

BHS honor roll announced

Baker High School has announced its second-semester honor roll. An asterisk denotes a 4.00 grade-point average.

Seniors

*Amelia Bott, *Megan Burk, *Joyce Clark, Porter Cline, *River Colton, *Daniel Drake, *Madison Elms, *Jayden Freeman, *Rachel Freeman, *Dusty Gyllenberg, *Koby Hansen, *Taylor Hawes, *Lindsay Livingston, *Molly McCrary, *Danielle McCauley, *Mackenzie Patterson, *Morgan Scilacci, *Bryson Smith, *Braden Staebler-Siewell, *Autumn Weideman, *Hannah Wilson, Samuel Baxter, Cody Bingham, Hannah Boruch, Lena Bowers, Stella Bowers, William Chung, Christopher Conant, Taylor Cornelius, Raelin Davis, Robinita Davis, Cody Denton, Isaac Farber, Adina Fast, Melissa Foltz, Kassidy Hertel, Nathaniel Illingsworth, Ashley Knoll, Hannah Lango, Victoria Rasmussen, Jacob Rilee, Hollis Robb, Rory Scilacci, Kylie Severson, Brandon Stairs.

Juniors

*Micah Bradford, *Josephine Bryan, *Zechariah Compos, *Thomas Dunn, *Kourtney Lehman, *Jared Miller, *Marcus Plumley, *Elizabeth Rea, *Erik Ruby, *Bryson Thomas, *Tiahna Virgillo, Katrina Bott, Cecylee Bruce, Boston Colton, Maggie Crabill, Logan Dyke, Jace Hays, Gracie Huggins, Hannah Jesenko, Tyler Joseph, Shane McCauley, Morgan Plumbtree, Ryan Schwin, Josephine Stearns, Elizabeth VanGaasbeck, Anja Wiedler

Sophomores

*Josie Ash, *Katya Brown, *Kaylee Burk, *Emily Carter, *Ashlie Chastain, *Kaeli Flanagan, *Kaiza Rea, *Mason Tomac, Augustena Cook, Kyra Davis, Isabella Evans, Madisyn Hampton, Clay Keller, Carson Lien, Duncan Mackenzie, Kaylan Mosser, Andrew Osborn, Cayn Osborn, Delaney Van Arsdall, Calli Ward, Michaela Watkins.

Freshmen

*Koedi Birmingham, *Emily Black, *Reno Hammond, *Abigail Hobbs, *Dylan Mastrude, *Andrea Pettit, *Jackson Rohner, *Zachary Schwin, *Morgan Stone, *Caden Stuart, Colton Anderson, Marisa Fuzi, Alyc Hayes, Hannah Johnson, Eli Lien, Abigail Martin, Chania Miller, Justin Miller, Jayme Ramos, Corrina Stadler, Griffin Stone.

Man arrested on theft charges

On Monday, the Baker County District Attorney released the following to all local media:

On June 2, 2016, Wade Jesse Foersterling (DOB: 06/15/1969) was indicted on seven counts of Theft in the First Degree, seven counts of Criminal Mistreatment in the First Degree and two counts of Theft in the Second Degree. It is alleged that he committed thefts of cash from January 1, 2011 to April 30, 2015 from a disabled person he had a legal duty to provide care for and the taking was not in the due and lawful execution of his responsibilities. Mr. Foersterling is represented by Robert Whitnah. He was arraigned on June 9. His next court date is set for August 1.

OTEC sends four to Wash. D.C.

Emily Faulk (Imbler), Elina Jenks (Hines), Heather Keniry (La Grande), and Nick Springer (Prairie City) packed their bags and set off for the 2016 Washington D.C. Electric Cooperative Youth Tour on Friday, June 10.

All four student leaders prepared to meet with approximately 1,700 of their fellow colleagues in Washington D.C. as part of Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative’s (OTEC) annual educational youth conference.

Each student was competitively selected and will represent Oregon and the Northwest as they join their colleagues from across the United States for a one-week trip to our nation’s capital. Over the course of the week, OTEC’s student delegates will visit famous historical sites, engage in leadership training, meet with their elected congressional officials, and bond with students from co-op communities all across the country. They will also learn about electric cooperatives and current issues in energy and climate change legislation that face our communities and our nation.

“This tour was initiated after Senator Lyndon B. Johnson suggested that co-op leaders send young, promising student leaders to the nation’s capital where they could have the opportunity to see, first-hand, what the American flag stands for and represents,” said OTEC Manager of Communications and Governments Affairs Lara Petittclerc-Stokes. “OTEC’s student delegates will have a week packed full visiting historical war memorials, national archives, the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian to name a few.”

“It is part of our Seven Cooperative Principles to dedicate education and training to the advancement of youth within the communities we serve,” said Petittclerc-Stokes. “This is an invaluable opportunity for these young leaders to travel and experience our nation’s capital. It is, for many, a once-in-a-life-time event.”

If you are a high school sophomore heading into your junior year and would like more details on the Washington D.C. Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, please visit: www.youthtour.coop

Applications for the 2017 tour will be available beginning November 2016.

City Council: Lewis resigns

This Tuesday’s City Council marked the tenth day on the job for new City Manager Fred Warner, Jr.—it also marked one of the last meetings for Councilor Sandy Lewis who announced she would be resigning as of July 13.

Lara Petittclerc-Stokes, Communications Director for Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative delivered a nearly \$91K capital credits check to the City and gave

a brief update on projects.

Two representatives from the Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association visited with Council, urging City and County officials to avoid “killing the goose that laid the golden egg” by raising transient lodging taxes and other fees that affect tourism. They stressed the importance of this considering the influx of new expenses on businesses such as Obamacare,

higher minimum wages and higher statewide lodging taxes.

According to the Eastern Oregon Visitors Association, tourists spend \$40 million per year in Baker County, generating \$1.7 million in state and local tax revenue.

Economic Development Director Greg Smith said the Employment Office had 230 current job openings, and that the pending