

# Outdoor Rec / Local

## County Commissioners

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Harvey abstained from voting, since he was not involved with any associated agreements, he said.

Bennett provided a proposed Idaho Power Boardman to Hemingway (B2H) Transmission Line Project update, which he said he tries to do quarterly.

He said comments were once again submitted, and the County's position is that the line should not come through the County, but rather, through the corridor in central Oregon (a position he said received no support from other counties), and he mentioned the numerous potential impacts, including visual, agricultural, and to Greater Sage-Grouse habitat. He said efforts are being made to propose an alternate route through the County, which is "tolerable" to the County, though there is strong opposition

to any route whatsoever, through the County. These efforts include discussions with landowners, as well as with Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Vale District Manager Don Gonzalez. The discussion continued, with questions and comments from several attendees.

Order No. 2016-152, Appointing Members To The Baker County Transportation Traffic Safety Commission, was approved, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns. Jason Yencopal was appointed, his term set to expire on July 1, 2018.

Order No. 2016-153, Appointing Members To The Baker County Planning Commission, was approved, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns. Lauri Hoopes and Tom VanDiepen, whose terms just expired, had asked to be considered, and were

re-appointed, their terms set to expire on September 1, 2020. Two other applications were received for the positions, from Robert Crawford, and Raymond Rienks.

Order No. 2016-154, Directing The County Clerk To Add City Council Positions For The City Of Unity To The November 8, 2016 Ballot, was approved, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns. According to the document, no candidates have filed to run for election of the Council positions (there are five open positions, for two, four-year, and three, two-year terms), and the ballot will include these, as well as space for write-ins. Prior to approval, Bennett explained the difficulty in recruiting anyone for the positions since 2010, when the remaining City Council members resigned (the Board has acted as Unity City Council since that

time), but that, in accordance with the law, these positions would be added to the ballot.

The Board held an Executive Session, in order to consider the employment of a County employee. Once back into regular session, Bennett moved to appoint Nancy Staten, as the interim Manager of the County Health Department (Robin Nudd plans to seek employment elsewhere), with Bennett serving as the Administrator, in conjunction with Martin in Human Resources, and County Administrative Services Coordinator Christena Cook in Administration, to provide support, and that discussion be initiated with New Directions Northwest, Inc., regarding the expansion of its services, to potentially consolidate Health Department services, along with other services. Kerns seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

## BLM issues guidance for Sage-grouse plans

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) today moved forward on its collaborative effort to conserve Greater Sage-Grouse and its habitat by issuing Instruction Memorandums (IMs) that clarify how aspects of the BLM's land use plans will be implemented. These seven IMs relate to oil and gas leasing and development, grazing, and the collection and use of land management data.

"Consistent with our unprecedented cooperation in developing the Greater Sage-Grouse plans, the implementation policies we are releasing today were developed in coordination with our partners in the states and interested stakeholders," BLM Director Neil Kornze said. "These Instruction Memorandums respond to state and stakeholder desires to see clear and consistent application of our management activities across the western Greater Sage-Grouse states while providing the flexibility needed to respond to local situations and concerns. Although each policy guides the specifics of a single issue in great detail, they all share the same goal of effectively conserving the West's sagebrush sea for the benefit of the people and animals who depend on it."

The seven IMs cover:

**Oil and gas leasing and development:** This IM provides guidance on how the BLM will prioritize oil and gas leasing and development in relation to habitat management areas, consistent with its sage-grouse conservation strategy and Greater Sage-Grouse land use plans.

**Grazing permit review priorities:** The BLM's land use plans commit the BLM to prioritize the review of grazing permits that are located within areas that were identified by a team of state and federal wildlife biologists as the highest quality habitat for breeding populations of sage-grouse. This policy provides further guidance on the considerations and process that should inform that prioritization.

**Grazing management thresholds and responses:** Under the Greater Sage-Grouse land use plans, the NEPA analysis for renewals or modification of grazing permits in priority habitat management areas must consider and may incorporate specific indicators of land health, as well as grazing management responses. This policy provides further guidance as to how and when thresholds and responses should be considered and implemented.

**Adaptive management triggers:** Most plans contain triggers developed with state wildlife agency experts that require the agency to take pre-defined management actions in response to changes in habitat or populations. This policy details how the BLM will proceed with notification and implementation of identified management actions if triggers have been exceeded.

**Disturbance tracking:** The land use plans commit the BLM to tracking disturbance and reclamation of sagebrush habitat. This policy guides the use of tracking tools to help ensure the consistent reporting of habitat disturbances and reclamation success across the Greater Sage-Grouse range.

**Effectiveness monitoring:** This policy explains how data gathered using the BLM's Assessment, Inventory and Monitoring (AIM) strategy will be pooled to assess how well the BLM is achieving its goals in the land use plans. These reports will use the data gathered under the AIM strategy and disturbance tracking policies and associated monitoring efforts.

**Habitat assessment framework:** Under this policy, the BLM will use Habitat Assessment Reports to gather information about the Greater Sage-Grouse and the health of its habitat into a single report that allows managers to make accurate assessments of habitat conditions at local, regional and range-wide scales.

The full text of each IM is available at [www.blm.gov/sagegrouse](http://www.blm.gov/sagegrouse) in the Documents and Resources section. On September 22, 2015, the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture finalized the Greater Sage-Grouse plans, which included amendments and revisions to 98 BLM and U.S. Forest Service land use plans across the West. The plans, which were developed in cooperation among local, state and federal agencies as well as private landowners, were cited by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a key reason it found that the Greater Sage-Grouse did not warrant protection under the Endangered Species Act. Information on the plans can be found here.

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. In Fiscal Year 2015, the BLM generated \$4.1 billion in receipts from activities occurring on public lands.

## Ladies golf and bridge scores

The Quail Ridge Ladies golf and bridge scores for August 31 are:

**Golf Winners:** Low Net 1st Flight 1st Myrna Evans 2nd Judy Karstens; 2nd Flight 1st Kathy Hopins, 2nd Karen Wollard; 3rd Flight Marianne Klinger

**Bridge Winners:** 1st Sandy Grover, 2nd Marlene Cross 3rd Marilyn Delfatti

## Man dies in accident near NP

On September 4, 2016 at about 6 a.m., OSP Troopers and emergency personnel responded to the report of single vehicle crash on Highway 237 near milepost 29 (near North Powder).

Preliminary investigation revealed a 2012 Ford Focus was traveling northbound on Highway 237 when it drifted across the southbound lane and off the road. The Ford struck several fog markers and

then a tree.

The driver of the Ford, Anthony A. George, age 27, of Union, was pronounced deceased on scene.

OSP was assisted by North Powder Fire and

La Grande Fire. This is an ongoing investigation and contributing factors are unknown. More information will be released as it becomes available.

## Man arrested in fire station break-in, burglary

On 08-24-16, George William Simms II (DOB: 08-22-1963) was arrested in Multnomah County on a Baker County Warrant charging Aggravated Theft in connection with the Burglary at the Pocahontas Fire Station that occurred

in April of this year. Simms is not a resident of Baker County and we are still investigating the crimes at both Pocahontas and Keating Fire Departments.

Sheriff Ash said, "I want to give praise to the

Deputies involved in the investigation for the collection and preservation of evidence at the crime scene and the long hours spent travelling to the Willamette Valley on short notice to interview and locate suspects."

The investigation is still ongoing and the Sheriff's Office asks if anyone knows or has had contact with George Simms to contact Sheriff Travis Ash at 541.523.6415 or email at [tash@bakersheriff.org](mailto:tash@bakersheriff.org).

## Library Board to meet

The Board of Directors of the Baker County Library District will meet Monday, September 19 at 6 p.m. at the Baker County Public

Library.

Primary topics on the agenda include

**Revision of the Code of Conduct policy**

• Proposed change to remove "shoes required" element

**Revision of Fee Schedule**

• Proposed change to detail charges for lost/damaged parts on children's Launchpad tablets

• Consideration of a Tax Anticipation Note loan

• Financial projection indicates no need for short-term operations loan again this year

**Review of 2015-2016 statistics report**

• Highlights of annual report submitted to Oregon State Library

The September 2016 meeting has been rescheduled from the regular second Monday due to schedule conflicts of participants.

The Board of Directors of the Baker County Library District regularly meets monthly from 6-8 p.m. on the second Monday in the Riverside Meeting Room of the Baker County Public Library, 2400 Resort St, Baker City.

Library board meetings are open to the public.

Comments from the public are welcomed as one of the first agenda items.

For agendas and minutes of past meetings, please visit Baker County Public Library or see the library website at <http://bakerlib.org/about-us/board-of-directors.html> for more information.

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