



Toxic algal bloom closes Lake Selmac rec area

By SHANE WELSH
Staff Writer

Lake Selmac may be contaminated and is closed for day use and camping until further notice.

A press conference was held Thursday, Aug. 19 at the lake where officials from Josephine County Parks Dept. and Public Health Dept. issued a public health advisory warning of a severe blue-green algal bloom.

"We were recently informed that there was a problem with algae and the resulting toxins. Because of that, we've made a decision to close the campgrounds as well as the day-use areas until we receive the test results back as to the safety of the facility," said Bruce Bartow, Josephine County Parks Dept. director.

According to Bartow, samples of lake water were taken and sent to Jim Sweet, an aquatic ecologist working for Aquatic Analysts research firm in Ohio. It is the only facility capable of performing the test, Bartow said.

"We took a sample of our potable water that is



JoCo Parks Dept. Director, Bruce Bartow with warning sign posted at Lake Selmac

taken from the lake... and sent it off yesterday. It could be up to a month before we get the results of that test," said Bartow.

The algae is a recurring problem that has arisen several times in the past. Said Bartow, "Algal bloom occurs every year, and it was noticed last week that there seemed to be higher concentrations than normal. That's when a decision was made to con-

tact a professional to have a test and evaluation done.

"The results raised concerns. Yesterday, we met with (Jim Sweet), public health, and the Sheriff's Office. The decision was made to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners to close the park, and this morning they agreed with that recommendation," said Bartow.

A report released by the Public Health Dept.

said when the algae dies, it releases a toxin that can be hazardous to humans and animals. Symptoms may include skin irritation, weakness, stomach or intestinal upset, cramps or fainting. Other symptoms can cause numbness, tingling, dizziness or paralysis, leading to difficult breathing and cardiac disturbance.

Sylvia Mireles, Public Health Dept. environ-

mental health manager said, "Blue green algal bloom is a naturally occurring phenomenon. (Since) there is no treatment...we have to wait for the test results to see if the levels of algae are toxic. If they are, we will continue to monitor the algae and keep the lake closed.

"(However), most blooms only last about two weeks, depending on the weather. Since the algae grows better in sunnier weather, the cooler temperatures over the weekend may help," she said.

The bloom and the condition of the water will be monitored closely by Josephine County Public Health Dept. and the Parks Dept. until the bloom subsides. The public will be advised when health concerns no longer exist.

Officials strongly urge the public not to consume any fish or water from the lake, go swimming or boating until the advisory is lifted. Signs warning of the danger are posted at various locations around the lake.

(Continued on page 7)

New bridge means H₂O relocation

By MICHELLE BINKER
Staff Writer

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) plans to replace the East Fork Illinois River bridge south of Cave Junction in the next several years.

But first the city must decide how to relocate a water line slung beneath the bridge, which serves Illinois River Forks State Park and six residences outside CJ city limits.

In a letter dated Aug. 17, ODOT utility specialist Joan Symons outlined the nature of the utility conflict with the proposed construction.

In order to "best ensure that utilities are protected and relocation work is completed successfully for all parties involved," ODOT is requiring the city to submit plans for moving the facilities, as well as a schedule for beginning and completion of the work, by Nov. 1.

Should the city not meet the deadline, it could be liable for costs associated with project delays.

As the letter states, "In accordance with Oregon Administrative Rules...all delay costs and/or claims

(Continued on page 7)

BSA brings McCaleb back to life

By SHANE WELSH
Staff Writer

From the ruins of fire and destruction springs life.

And so comes the birth of a new McCaleb Ranch Boy Scout camp.

In the wake of the 2002 Biscuit Fire lie the ruins of McCaleb Ranch, located just 12 miles west of Selma. The 106-acre ranch was devoured by flames the morning of July 26.

The ranch was the former site of Mountain View Ranch; according to information compiled by Kristina Anderson, great-granddaughter of George and Lena Anderson, who homesteaded the ranch near Illinois Falls in the early 1920s.

Anderson's history said the original ranch site was formerly used by Indians as a gathering place to prepare food, hunt and fish.

The historic two-room caretaker's house was once used as a miners' office and a school house during the late 1800s and early 1900s, wrote Anderson.

In 1927, the land was purchased by Betty McCaleb and her husband, Bob, who preceded her in death in 1958. Prior to their purchase, the ranch was owned by a man named Lutz, who held a nearby placer mining claim for copper.

In 1960, Mrs. McCaleb donated the ranch to the Crater Lake

(Continued on page



Photos by Dale and Elaine Sandburg



HOLLAND BLAZE- Power lines felled by a large oak limb in the 6000 block of Holland Loop Road, sparked a 3-acre blaze on Friday, Aug. 20 around 11:30 a.m. IVFD firefighters responded, but were denied access to the burning property which was blocked by the limb. Residents Keith and Kurt McIntosh guided crews to the backside of the fire. IVFD, USFS, ODF and G.E. Forestry Inc. extinguished the blaze without damage to nearby residences.

(Continued on page 7)

Oregon not in a 'state of de-nile': West Nile arrives

"The first case of West Nile Virus (in Southern Oregon) has been found in a Stellar Jay bird located on the border between Josephine and Jackson County on the Rogue River Highway," according to Cat Metz, communicable disease nurse at Josephine County Public Health Dept.

The bird tested positive Friday, Aug. 20 at Oregon State University in Corvallis. Jackson County Vector Control Program is setting mosquito traps in the same area the jay was found in order to determine whether or not there are infected mosquitoes in the area.

According to a report

from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the virus attacks the central nervous system with varying symptoms:

*80 percent of people infected will not show any symptoms.

*20 percent of people infected will display mild symptoms including fever,

headache, body aches, nausea, vomiting, swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach and back. Symptoms typically last a few days.

*One in 150 people infected will develop severe illness including high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation,

(Continued on page 7)

Weather Watch

Cave Junction
Wednesday, August 25
Rain tapering off
High--74, Low--55.

Thursday, August 26
Some sun
High--75, Low--52.

Friday, August 27
Sunny, partly cloudy
High--80, Low--53.

Saturday, August 28
Mostly sunny
High--87, Low--55.

Sunday, August 29
Mostly sunny
High--88, Low--55.

Monday, August 30
Mostly sunny
High--89, Low--56.

Tuesday, August 31
Warm & sunny
High--92, Low--56.