

DeFazio, Wyden decry county payments cut

A 50 percent reduction to the county payments law was announced by the White House Monday, Feb. 6.

Under the proposal, there would be a \$650 million reduction for Oregon counties including \$85 million currently used for education in Oregon.

In response to the partial reauthorization of the crucial county payments law in President Bush's fiscal year 2007 budget, U.S. Congressmen Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.) and Greg Walden (R-Ore.) have issued a statement.

This law, which provides essential funding to counties throughout the country with federal forestland, including Josephine County, is to expire at the end of fiscal 2006. Congressional reauthorization and appropriations are needed for it to continue.

Josephine County stands to lose some \$20 million per year if the law is not reauthorized.

DeFazio and Walden are co-authors of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Reauthorization Act, H.R. 517. They issued the following:

"We're pleased to see that the president supports reauthorizing the critical county payments program,

but the funding levels are inadequate.

"We have organized a strong, bipartisan coalition in the House that will use the president's proposal as a start, but we aim to reauthorize and fully fund the program. We have an obligation to support the rural Oregonians who for decades have been stewards of our federal lands.

"Ending the county payments program would abandon that century-long promise and economically devastate those communities.

"It's most helpful to have the president's budget call for reauthorization of the county roads and schools program, and to have it provide some level of funding. That gives us a starting point that we never had with the Clinton administration budgets.

"However, it's only a starting point, and a distant one from where we need to finish. We've already put together a strong coalition in the Congress and across the country.

"The federal government must keep its century-old commitment to forested communities, and we won't stop working until it does."

H.R. 517 reauthorizes Public Law 106-393, introduced in 1999 and enacted in October 2000.

Elderly independence a major concern for many

What today's seniors want most is to age in peace.

What they fear most is to lose their independence.

But what they're least likely to ask for is the kind of help that will keep them comfortable and safe at home. That's why it's often up to the adult children to look for the signs that their elderly loved one needs help.

Neglecting those signs will likely lead seniors to the kind of dependence that most would like to avoid.

"Seniors often don't recognize when they require help," said Indra Nicholas, owner of the Home Instead Senior Care office serving Josephine County. "That's why adult children should identify where their loved ones need assistance.

"Home Instead Senior Care has made this process easier by providing a list of simple, look-and-see signs that adult children can use to identify the types of services their loved ones might need."

Providing seniors assistance with a few basic tasks -- such as meal preparation, light housework, companionship and medication reminders -- often means the

difference between whether they stay at home or go to a facility. And that kind of independence is important to their overall happiness."

The latest report in AARP's Beyond 50 series confirmed that seniors' number-one fear is loss of independence.

"The vast majority of people 50 and older do not require long-term assistance at any given time. However, most people will require assistance at some point in their lives, and most families will face these issues with their older family members," the report said.

Seniors' expectations for remaining at home are high. In a conducted by Home Instead Senior Care, 83 percent of seniors surveyed said they are very or somewhat likely to remain in their homes rather than move to a care facility.

Home Instead Senior Care, the largest provider of nonmedical home care and companionship for the elderly in the world, sends Caregivers to seniors to help keep them independent and at home for as long as possible, Nicholas said.

Anglers lines (for fishing) need extra attention

By GARY KLEIN

For some, their rods and reels never get a break.

Others might put the fishing tackle aside during the coldest parts of the year or during hunting season. But regardless of how much you fish, there's no reason to take to the water without carefully inspecting your fishing line.

Think of it like this: the only thing that connects you to the fish is your line. Should something untoward happen to it, it could fail to function. You could lose your favorite lure or -- worse yet -- a large fish.

So whether you're digging out your fishing tackle after it has spent a long winter in the corner of the garage, or heading out for your umpteenth trip this year, there are a few things to look for on your fishing line.

By far, the worst factor for fishing line is sunlight, especially monofilament. Sunlight weakens line, making it stiff and brittle. Even super lines can be altered by sun and can lose their color.

Just as you have to protect your eyes from harmful UV rays with a pair of Cocoon sunglasses, when possible keep your line out of the sunlight and do your best to keep it dry when not in use. Going from wet to dry over and over can damage line as well.

Fishing line can suffer nicks and scrapes on rocks, logs and other sharp objects, especially on the terminal end of the line. When reeling in your bait, run your fingers over the line -- often times you can feel line damage that you cannot see. Anytime you feel something

wrong with the line, retie above the damaged area.

Fluorocarbon line, while not as susceptible to sun and water damage, can be damaged by the friction from repeated trips through rod guides. Whenever the drop-shot bite is good, I like to spool several spinning reels with fluorocarbon line.

But, since line management is so important with a finesse tactic like this, I will respool every rig that I used each night of the tournament. During the day, I pay close attention to how my line lays in the water and its line memory to help me determine if the line is compromised. I see the line better through polarized sunglasses like my Cocoon that fit over my prescription glasses. Watching your line can also help you detect strikes that you might otherwise not feel.

More often than not, I respool my reels not because the line is damaged, but because I need to replenish the supply that I used during the day. I tie and retie so much that I can lose dozens of yards of line in a single outing. But, the heavier the cover you are fishing, the more often you should change your line.

When exposed to the elements and repeated rugged use, fishing line needs regular attention. But stored properly it can last several years. Whether it is a filler spool or a bulk spool, I keep it in its original box, write the date on the box and keep it in a cool, dry storage locker out of the sunlight and fluorescent light. Even now I am using spools dated 2001.

When you are fishing

for money or the fish of a lifetime, new line is the cheapest insurance policy you can have. Before you take your next trip, check out your line and make sure

that it's sound.

(Gary Klein is a two-time Bass Angler of the year and a 24-time Bassmaster Classic qualifier. He lives in Weatherford, Texas.)

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