

BLM plan would raise harvests, county income

A plan that could result in a hefty timber harvest increase while adding jobs and revenue for Southwest Oregon -- including Josephine County -- was unveiled by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

BLM officials presented the plan Thursday afternoon, Aug. 9 in Anne Basker Auditorium in Grants Pass to the Josephine County Long Term Funding Committee. Simultaneously, BLM conducted public announcements using the news media.

The federal agency will conduct an open house regarding its four alternatives in Cave Junction on Thursday, Sept. 6 from 6 to 8 p.m.

The location will be announced in this newspaper.

BLM also will hold a community workshop/open house on Wednesday, Sept. 12 in Grants Pass from 3:15 to 9:30 p.m. The location will be announced.

Comments regarding the proposals, including the preferred alternative that would increase logging and affect some habitat restrictions under the Northwest Forest Plan, are due Nov. 10. They can be emailed to www.blm.gov/or. And they can be sent by regular mail to Western Oregon Plan Revisions, P.O. Box 2965, Portland OR 97208.

The draft Environmental Impact Statement

(EIS) released by BLM involves management of 2.5 million acres of public land in S.W. Oregon.

"We are revising our management plans in order to meet our dual goals of timber output and continuing to provide for habitat and conservation of federally listed species," said Ed Shepherd, BLM's state director for Oregon.

"This effort," he said, "is one of the most significant planning undertakings in Western Oregon. The draft EIS examines the effects from an ecological, social and economic standpoint."

The plan can be viewed at www.blm.gov/or/plans/wopr. It is a document of

approximately 1,600 pages. It was outlined Thursday in Grants Pass by Tim Reuwsaat, BLM's Medford District manager; and Bill Freeland, also of BLM Medford.

With increased logging, now greatly reduced in the Medford District because of lawsuits brought by groups opposed to it, Josephine County could realize some \$13 million in O&C revenue per year in timber receipts.

Faced with declining income under the O&C program, the county has reduced the number of employees and benefits, closed the library system, and realized decreases in law enforcement.

However, county com-

mission Chairman Jim Rafenburg noted that it could be a minimum of three years before any revenue is realized. And there is the possibility of further litigation in connection with BLM's preferred alternative.

It would raise the allowed timber harvest from 57 million board feet (mbf) to 132 mbf. It's estimated that more than 3,000 jobs would result in the 18 O&C counties.

The district's actual harvest has been in the vicinity of 20 mbf per year because of lawsuits. They generally involved the northern spotted owl and other requirements of the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan, according to BLM.

The preferred alternative would reduce habitat protection of the Northwest Forest Plan. Habitat for the spotted owl and marbled

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Save library meeting set

Those interested in finding out what might be done to reopen Josephine County libraries can attend a meeting in Selma on Wednesday, Aug. 15.

Sponsored by the Save My Library grass-roots organization, the meeting will run from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Selma Center, a short distance north of Ray's Food Place.

The first general meeting to consider new ideas for reopening and running the county library system was held three weeks ago in Grants Pass.

Wednesday's meeting is called by Dale Matthews, who publishes *First Friday* in Grants Pass, and former library board member Jon Wacker. They want to share information about recent progress, and receive opinions.

Renewable energy goal of Dave Toler task force

Making Josephine County as powerfully self-reliant as possible is the goal of a Renewable Energy Task Force being organized by Dave Toler, vice chairman of the county board of commissioners.

"I'm working to pull together people from throughout the county who have appropriate backgrounds," said Toler. "People with expertise in various renewable energy

sources -- from small hydro and wind to solar and biomass -- can contact me.

"I would like to conduct the first meeting of the committee in October, giving us six weeks to form up," he said. He can be contacted at 474-5221 or via email at dtoler@co.josephine.or.us.

The Illinois Valley resident said that he first approached his fellow commissioners during March

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I.V. Fire District eyeing grant for 24-hour shifts

Around-the-clock staffing at some stations of Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) in Cave Junction could be achieved with three salaried squads of two firefighters each.

With that in mind, IVFD directors voted 4-0 in favor of seeking a federal grant of approximately \$1.4 million. The program, under Homeland Security, has a four-year format with partial funding; with the participating agency picking up the whole tab for the fifth year.

During the first of four years under the program, the federal money would pay for 90, 80, 50 and 30 percent of the personnel costs. IVFD would have to come up with the balance for each of the four years, plus what would

be needed for the fifth year.

The board also OK'd 4-0 the possibility of placing a levy on the Nov. 6 ballot to fund IVFD's financial portions. Directors voted during their meeting at administrative headquarters on Thursday night, Aug. 9. Director Jerry Lamb was absent due to a family emergency.

Deputy Chief Jeff Gavlik made the presentation on both matters.

"This is needed for our responses to emergencies," said Chief Harry Rich.

"We should go for it," said Director Sam Michel. Noted board Chairman Larick Jones, "It's coming to where we have to do this."

Directors Dusty Bouchard and Edwin "Bob"

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BERRY NICE!! - Live entertainment, a dunk tank, blackberry goodies, bingo games, booths, and other attractions were among features of the 26th annual Wild Blackberry Arts & Crafts Festival in Cave Junction during the weekend of Aug. 11 and 12. Chief coordinators were Mark & Judy Russo. (Clockwise from top, left) Jackie Gandee at the Lifelines booth outside Treehouse Florist & Gifts; Dorothea Kramer-Hover, of Illinois River Valley Arts Council in the county building with specially decorated shoes and quilts for a silent auction; entertainer Ross Welcome; 'The Frankie Hernandez Band' at Jubilee Park; and song stylist Nicole Navarro. There also was a display by Wildlife Images, children's activities and two days of breakfast by Cave Junction Lions Club. This year's cooler weather contributed to a fine turnout. More photos page 14. (Photos by Illinois Valley News, and Lee Eschen/Ashgrove Visual Arts.)



ORGANIC GARDENS in Takilma were visited during a special bicycle tour organized by Spiral Living Center. Story on page 7. (Photo provided)