

# Legislator ponders wilderness as federal debt collateral

By SCOTT JORGENSEN  
IVN Staff Writer

The push for more wilderness protection on land throughout Oregon and other states has at least one state senator wondering if it is somehow related to collateralizing the nation's mounting debt load.

Sen. Doug Whitsett (R-Klamath Falls) pondered the possibility in an April 17 newsletter to constituents.

He wrote: "President Obama's administration has been borrowing money at previously unheard-of rates.

"The direct result is that our national debt, and the

requirement for collateral to secure that debt, has been growing at an unprecedented rate as well."

Whitsett noted, "The rate of acquisition of private lands by the federal government has also increased dramatically in recent years."

During a Friday, Oct. 16 telephone interview, Whitsett said that there is a pattern of resource-rich areas becoming increasingly off-limits to any kind of economic activity.

"The federal government has summarily prohibited the exploration and development of one of the largest oil deposits ever discovered in the

Green River basin in Wyoming and Utah," Whitsett said. "The Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (in Utah) sits on one of the largest coal deposits in the world. It's locked up now."

Whitsett added that the United States has "prevented the exploration and development of our own continental shelf oil and gas, and other nations like China are exploring them for us."

Despite the seeming coincidences, Whitsett stopped just short of saying that the issues are directly related.

"I don't know that to be true, but I'm very concerned

that it may be true," he said. "It doesn't make a great deal of sense unless there's another reason. My concern is that the other reason is collateralization of the debt."

Whitsett elaborated on the details in his constituent newsletter.

"Is the real truth that our creditors required further guarantee that their collateral is sufficient and safe?" Whitsett wrote. "Those nations and banking entities that have loaned the United States trillions of dollars consider these gigantic reserves the collateral that secures their loans. They want these resources,

their collateral, preserved until the loans are repaid."

If that is the case, Whitsett said, the nation's leaders are taking its citizens on "the absolute wrong path."

"The only way to get out of this mess and economic morass is to start using our own natural resources to build things, create jobs and create wealth," he said. "No nation has ever endured wealth and progress that has not used its natural resources. We do have abundant natural resources, we just don't use them."

Right now, Whitsett said, the federal government pays

approximately \$400 billion per year in interest on its debt.

"We're not talking about paying down the principle, just maintaining the interest at the current level," he said.

Whitsett said that the U.S. dollar has lost 34 percent of its value since 2000, which may be of concern to nations like China and Japan, which are among the government's largest creditors.

"If I were that creditor, I would want things in durable goods, not a promissory note to pay it back with dollars," Whitsett said.

# Domestic violence summit in Grants Pass emphasizes solutions

By SCOTT JORGENSEN  
IVN Staff Writer

Representatives from community organizations throughout Josephine County converged on Evergreen Federal Bank's Bear Hotel in Grants Pass on Monday, Oct. 19 for the first Domestic Violence Leadership Summit.

Approximately 50 people attended the summit, seen as becoming an annual event. There was representation from Rogue Valley Boys & Girls Club, On Track, Options, Zonta International, and Grants Pass Dept. of Public Safety.

Beth Williams from the Cave Junction-based Illinois Valley Safe House Alliance (IVSHA) also was present. She stated that some 10,000 domestic violence victims have been assisted by IVSHA and the Grants Pass-based Women's Crisis Support Team (WCST) during the past two years.

Williams cited a study conducted by the governor's office, which stated that only 11 percent of victims seek aid from survivor programs. A study from the Center for Disease Control also was cited by Williams. It showed

that calls to emergency hotlines rose 43 percent in 2008.

"I'm taking that as a positive note," Williams said, adding that it means victims are attempting to access available services.

The overall goal of the summit was to bring together the different groups to develop a 10-year strategy for combating domestic violence.

An open discussion was held regarding programs that have been useful in addressing the issue. Particular recognition was given to Young Men's Work, which cautions teen-age boys against vio-

lence; and programs encouraging mentorships.

Williams said that IVSHA has been working with the county's probation department to identify potential clients. Shannon Williams of WCST said that group's crisis line helped around 6,500 victims last year.

WCST also helps battered women obtain restraining orders, Shannon Williams said. Personnel sometimes accompany emergency responders to domestic violence scenes and to medical care.

Several table discussions then were held about obsta-

cles to solving domestic violence problems. They include the challenges of pursuing criminal charges against abusers when victims don't show up to testify in court, loss of jobs in the local economy, and limited services for women without children.

Additionally, a lack of resources for sheriff's deputy patrols and to lodge offenders at county jail, and involving men to become part of the solution.

Josephine County Commissioner Dave Toler, an Illinois Valley resident, attended. He praised the efforts

of District Attorney Stephen Campbell to prosecute criminals in the county, and added that a plan to bolster staffing at the sheriff's office should be fully implemented within the next few months.

That will boost available space at the jail by 40 percent and get the county much closer to around-the-clock deputy patrols, Toler said.

The group spent the entire afternoon discussing solutions to the problems presented during the previous discussions.

# After school programs offered for I.V. kids

On Thursday, Oct. 22, Evergreen Elementary School in Cave Junction and the Illinois Valley branch of the Boys & Girls Club are hosting "Lights on After School." It is intended to

highlight the new 21st Century learning Grant program.

The school and club have partnered to offer classes in cooking, drama, dance and origami. The pro-

gram will run from 2 to 6:30 p.m., with a free, hot dinner at 3:30 p.m.

Parents are welcome to attend the event, which is open to the public.

For more information,

phone the I.V. Boys & Girls Club at 592-4771, or Evergreen Elementary School at 592-3136.

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but it takes a woman to make a home.  
~ Chinese proverb ~

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