

Expansion ... Continued from A-1

"This expansion would help keep recreation and tourism-dependent businesses open and support the market for our home-based micro enterprises," Brandt said. "The acreage needed to expand Oregon Caves is a pittance compared to the millions of acres the timber industry has had at its disposal throughout Oregon."

Not everyone supports the current OCRA bill. Josephine County's three commissioners recently signed a resolution opposing the expansion.

"My role in participating in the resolution was to get the senators' attention, to point out that we have issues around fire protection. If the monument is to be expanded, those issues need to be addressed," said Commissioner Cheryl Walker. "In

the last 20 years, the National Park Service has really struggled with funding for maintenance and typically we can get more money for fire mitigation from the Forest Service."

Walker added that speaking only for herself, if fire mitigation issues are addressed, she would reconsider her position on the proposed expansion.

"In the past, the monument has proportionately received more money per acre for fuel reductions than the forest service has," said John Roth, a geologist at Oregon Caves. "Neither agency is likely to get much money in the near future for fire mitigation though, because the monument is smaller, we're able to place more focus per acre with our current staff and volunteers."

Roth added that 20 percent of what's needed on the present-day

monument has been completed and the Forest Service has already done a substantial amount of fuel reductions on lands proposed for transfer. He also said that the OCRA bill does address fire considerations.

But Walter said the boundary expansion provides even more opportunity for the Forest Service and National Park Service to work together on fuel treatment projects and trail upgrades.

"While this seems like it should be a relatively simple task, these cooperative efforts are not often seen in government," he said. Walter said he hopes to see more of the same on additional community projects designed to enhance visitor appeal heading toward the expanded monument.

"My thanks go out to the

Siskiyou National Forest and the Oregon Caves personnel for all these efforts," he added.

Brandt, a retired National Park Service employee who worked at Oregon Caves for many years, hopes the Josephine County Commissioners will get on board with the proposed monument expansion.

"This is not about environmentalism, this is all about economics," Brandt said. "The fact that the commissioners oppose giving even a single crumb to help feed the hundreds of tourism-dependent businesses in this county is what makes the timber industry appear selfish and contriving and makes the commissioners appear unaware that their legacy is flattening Josephine County's economic development options into a future of stagnation."

When viewing Google satellite images of the forest surrounding the monument, Brandt says it is difficult to spot any land that hasn't been logged or converted to tree farms. The largest intact chunk of forest is the present-day monument. Land proposed for monument expansion is either high mountain meadow or Late Successional Reserve and would never be slated for commercial timber harvest and the grazing rights have been bought out and retired and there is no mining to speak of, he said.

"The argument that this 4,000 acres will somehow have a negative impact on timber production doesn't hold any water," Brandt said.

Crime ... Continued from A-1

"We want people to know it's us, their friends and neighbors, and not someone casing their property," Nichols added.

"We're about prevention," said CAC co-founder Glenn Woodbury. "We're out at 3 in the morning, and when trouble-makers or meth heads see us, man, they take off quick."

Woodbury believes the Illinois Valley never had the late night protection it needed "even when the sheriff's office was fully funded," and that groups like CAC will be necessary indefinitely, regardless of the outcome of the currently proposed law enforcement levy.

Gilbertson, who urges people to vote for the new levy, said to control crime a functioning judicial system is crucial and must include better funding for the jail, the D.A.'s office and the juvenile justice programs. Nonetheless, he added his commitment to the public is to do the best job possible with available funds.

"We're still in tough times, and I don't see any light on the horizon, economically speaking," Gilbertson said. "Crime has spiked about 45 percent in the county. At the end of the day, people have to decide what level of safety is important to them."

"We really need to support our sheriff. He's a good man,"

said Ken LeGaux, one of the Selma patrol coordinators. "But when the commissioners write a budget for the sheriff's office the money should go to the sheriff and not be spread out over other programs, like it is now."

LeGaux said the Selma neighborhood watch is coming together with volunteers organizing "quadrants" that have captains in each location who share information and make reports. Signs are being posted at participating homes and patrol vehicle bumpers will display identifying decals.

"We've been patrolling for two months and we've located a few meth houses and gotten ID's on suspicious vehicles out cruising late at night," LaGaux said.

Most of the neighborhood watch groups also participate in the fast-growing 1,500 member "To Catch a Thief" Facebook group.

The next neighborhood watch meeting is on March 21 from 5 to 8:30 p.m. at the County Building in Cave Junction. More volunteers to fill the roles of "Street Captain" are sought. Contact Guenter Ambron at cmec@cavenet.com for more information. On March 17 at 6 p.m. a replay of the March 4 meeting will broadcast on www.TakilmaFM.com.

GMO Chat: by Audry Moore.

One step forward, two steps back ~ Farmers vs. GMOs

Continuing our journey into GMOs, Alice has once again found herself in a quandary. Just when she began to maneuver her way through Wonderland ~ BAM. Out of left field comes not one, but two curve balls. In our case what has become a HOT topic in Oregon. So hot, it has brought national attention. Last week, beyond researching farmers vs. GMOs, we came face to face with two interesting Bills before Oregon's Senate. Senate bill 633 and House bill 3192. Both proposed by members of our Legislature - yet, what they've proposed will take away community (farmers) rights to make ANY local decisions affecting seeds, seed heritage and wait for it.....yes, GMOs.

We're now faced with legal action that is willfully pitting farmers rights against corp. rights. Furthering attempts to force GMOs onto a world that is still waiting for answers. Surprise, surprise ~ these

attempts are now pandemic.

This leads us to something that must be said. One of the most challenging issues in attempting to bring awareness to GMOs, from a non-biased stance, has been the topic itself. A topic that has now taken another turn, as in Wonderland, an unexpected twist. How does one stay neutral when faced with GMOs pitting the rights of farmers/citizens against the rights of corporations? No longer just on a global scale, but now in our own backyard. Faced with a rampant assault making it all the more difficult to stay neutral. Not because of bias, rather dealing with blatant attempts to not only shut down the conversation, but now pushing efforts to take away our rights to even decide. The What, Why or Who almost comical, as the obvious is now on display in Salem.

Kim Goodwin, Executive Director of Oregonians for Farm & Food Rights said "Food choice should be a right - not a corporate-directed, government mandated edict." Farming is everyone's concern

Goodwin added. <http://www.farmandfoodrights.org/as> Goodwin provides further insight into our situation at: <http://www.eugeneweekly.com/article/canola-questions>.

Speaking in support of GMOs is an organization called Oregonians for Food and Shelter. <http://ofsonline.org/> Their motto: Provide, Protect and Produce. Their Resources link: Biotechnology, Fertilizer and Pesticides. The bias is palpable.

Clearly we have two sides that could not be more polarized. One side has farmers wanting the right to protect their crops, livelihood and future through choice. The other side is corporations who literally are working to force GMOs down the throat of farmers, who clearly comprehend the risks.

Who is aligning with our farmers? If not, why not? We are speaking of those who produce our food. Yet, as we pointed out in our 3rd article the same companies that manufacture biotech/GMOs, fertilizers, and pesticides are

none other than the same corp. now doing all in their power to push GMOs onto Oregon. They have the money, power, and time to sway our Legislators into thinking GMOs should be here to stay, farmers and citizens be damned! This trend is global.

'In 1900, 41% of the workforce in the US was directly employed in agriculture- each farm producing over five different crops for sale—not counting food consumed on the farm or sold locally, outside the commodity system. Furthermore, 60% of Americans lived in rural areas.' (Source: USDA.)

'In 2000, just 1.9% of Americans were employed in agriculture, farms produced an average of just over one crop for sale, and less than 1 out of 4 Americans lived in rural areas. The number of farms has fallen 63%, while the average farm size has risen 67%.' <http://www.gnolls.org/tag/industrial-agriculture/>

Till next time, when we consider the Meat and Potatoes of GMOs.

Dan ... Continued from A-5

The church is a multi-purpose building. The chairs can be arranged for a wedding, worship service, or meeting. During crises, such as floods or wildfires, the church is opened as shelter for people displaced from their homes. In late February, the church was also the scene of a 90th birthday party for Wanda Goines.

Robinson has worked for 26 years to build good relationships with Valley individuals and groups. He said he has warm friendships with the pastors of other churches, meeting periodically for community church gatherings. These area pastors find common ground on which they agree, which benefits the community in many ways: providing food, clothes, and shelter, and other community efforts.



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