

County called out on ‘unsubstantiated statements and investigation’

Jason McMillen
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In an article published by the *Curry Coastal Pilot* Oct. 20, Josephine County’s community development director Julie Schmelzer and Commissioner Lily Morgan claimed that, in addition to 3,000 legal cannabis operations, Josephine County is host to an estimated 5,000 illegal ones. In anticipation for the potential ban regarding commercial cannabis farming on Rural Residential (RR) land, as reported in the Oct. 17 issue of the *Curry Coastal Pilot*, Schmelzer said that she warned the Curry County Commissioners that unscrupulous growers may move over into their county should the ban force them out. She further recommended that they develop rules to make sure that the industry develops in an equitable manner that would be safe for all residents.

When asked for the source that suggests Josephine County has 5,000 illegal grow sites, Schmelzer said that her information came from a state agency though she refused to specify which one. Wally Hicks, Josephine County’s Attorney, said that the county possesses no documents pertinent to such a statement.

Chris Hall, a local activist and president of the Cave Junction Farmers’ Market, is investigating public records regarding the prolonged flood of informal complaints made to the county commissioners regarding the growth of cannabis. His goal is to determine whether or not the complaints, often cited by the commissioners to be received daily, are substantial enough in quantity to warrant the ban in the face of existing and woefully unenforced county regulation and sweeping state regulation which will go into effect next growing season.

Although he has received his first request for all physical copies of informal complaints located in the commissioner’s offices, Hall has yet to receive the second request for 728 cannabis complaint emails that the commissioners have received. According to Hall, the request was filed Oct. 10.

SEE COUNTY ON A-10

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(Photos by Laura Mancuso, *Illinois Valley News*)

Former Mayor Carl Jacobson Jr. (left) addresses the crowd Saturday, Nov. 11 outside the Cave Junction City Hall for Veterans Day.

<i>There are many flags in many lands, There are flags of ev’ry hue, But there is no flag in any land, Like our own red, white and blue.</i>	<i>How to get them here, I’d make a flag, Of our loved red, white and blue. (Refrain)</i>	<i>by side For my stripes of red and white. (Refrain)</i>
<i>Refrain: Then hurrah for the flag, Our country’s flag, Its stripes and its white stars too, For there is no flag in any land Like our own red, white and blue.</i>	<i>I would take a piece of ev’ning sky, With the red of rainbow bright, And would use it as it was on high, For my stars and field of blue. (Refrain)</i>	<i>We shall always love the stars and stripes, And to it we will be true, To this land of ours and dear old flag, With its red and white and blue. (Refrain)</i>
<i>I know where the pretty colors are, And I’m sure if I but knew</i>	<i>When I’d want a piece of fleecy cloud, With the red of rainbow bright, And I’d put them length wise, side</i>	Song submitted by Millie Watkins ~Author unknown

Report claims fires are the new normal

Annette McGee Rasch
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Over 170 scientific studies condensed and assembled by the Ashland-based Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center (KS Wild) into one user-friendly report describes impacts to the region’s public lands in a “warming world” and discusses ways to best protect these natural places.

“Most climate change conversation is in the frame of impacts and mitigation,” said KS Wild Program Director Tim Ream. “But that frame misses half the story, the need for adaptation. We have to admit that climate change is already happening, and more is on the way, even if we do our best. How are we going to adapt to minimize that damage?”

Thus this new report ‘Hotter, Drier, No Less Wild - Protecting Public Land and Biodiversity in the Klamath-Siskiyou Region in the Era of Climate Change,’ features “the best available science” and places emphasis on coping with climate reality. Go to www.kswild.org to access the full report.

The report comes at a good time. After decades of debate, numerous national polls, the National Oceanic

and Atmospheric Administration and even The Weather Channel all say the wildfires and hurricanes of 2017 put a huge dent in public denial of climate change.

“It’s critical that both the public and our public servants understand and act on this information now, while there is still some time to develop strategies to protect our region’s forests and rivers - and our communities that depend on them,” Ream said.

The Illinois Valley is nestled within the heart of a gem. One of the wildest regions remaining on the U.S. West Coast, the eight-million acre Klamath-Siskiyou region is defined by and renowned for both world-class biodiversity and free-flowing rivers characterized by exceptional water quality and native salmon runs.

The sheer number of plant and animal species found within these wildlands, coupled with its central location between the Sierra, Cascade, and Coastal Mountains, make the region a critically important nature refuge in these challenging times.

“This new report has two critical messages about minimizing the impacts from climate change already hitting our forests and rivers,” Ream said. “To assure our area’s wildlife survives on into our grandkids’

generation, we need to reduce non-climate impacts from logging, grazing, mining, and dams and we need to protect climate refuges like old-growth forests, roadless areas, and cold rivers and streams. Our generation caused this mess. We have to take responsibility to fix it.”

The report also covers the essential need to support reduction of carbon emissions on a global level to help stave off climate change impacts; and notes how this region’s forests provide an important “carbon sink” - which refers to how intact forests help store carbon and keep it out of the atmosphere.

Scientific consensus in the report regarding the region’s future is clear:

“On average, the Klamath-Siskiyou region is already hotter and, consequently, drier than historical norms. In the future, more precipitation will come in the winters and less in the summers. More winter precipitation will come as rain, resulting in less snowpack, important to feeding streams throughout the summer. “

SEE NORMAL ON A-3

Cave Junction has no plans for first shipment of Cannabucks

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City recorder Becky Patton confirmed that Cave Junction received \$6,304 cannabis tax dollars Oct. 5 in the state’s first quarterly distribution since recreational cannabis sales began back in 2015. Due to a change in the state’s distribution formula, for which only part of the first distribution was based on, future payouts may vary from the initial. Patton hasn’t been notified as to what future amounts may look like.

The new formula pays out cities based on two factors: total population (75 percent) and the sum of grower, wholesaler, processor and retailer licenses (25 percent). Cities that opt out of any of the listed license types will be entirely ineligible for state cannabis dollars. “There’s not a lot of potential locations for it but there’s the potential for more retailers and processors,” Mayor Daniel Dalegowski said, “There’s some industrial land that you could get

processing type things going on.” According to the Oregon Liquor Control Commission’s records, 16 Oregon counties have outright banned all cannabis related activities and a further 78 cities have banned one or more license type.

The tax dollars can be used by the city for any purpose they see fit. Dalegowski thinks that the additional funds, though meager, would be best suited for supplementing the public safety budget. “My primary goal for it would be to chuck it into our law enforcement fund—toward the end goal of having some extra enforcement at night.”

Dalegowski added that one of the potential aspects that the money could be used for is public safety by installing additional surveillance equipment and lighting.

“This may never be all that significant for the city,” Dalegowski said, “It’s not really going to save us or anything like that but it’s definitely better than nothing.”

Thanksgiving at Jubilee Park readies to serve, looks for helping hands.

Read about it on A-5