

I'm Officially Exhausted

By Emily Braswell

FLPMA coordination
cooperation

When it comes to understanding the recent events surrounding the Blue Mountain Forest Plan revision (BMFP), it would appear that citi-

zens within the counties encompassed by the document are struggling with confusion and misunderstanding, coupled with anticipation and detachment; and just a pinch of preconception on top; creating an overtone of utter and complete digression. Social events now require knowledge of 'duck and cover' maneuvers to avoid the low flying opinions and heated tempers, which seem to have become a normal occurrence in everyday conversations surrounding Memorandums of Understanding (MoU's), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA Law), or the U.S. Forest Service in general.

What does all this banter mean? More importantly, why on earth is everyone sitting around discussing moot arguments when they could be researching and brainstorming various ways to move forward from this point? Perhaps a few facts, uncovered after careful investigation, can assist in shrinking the scuttlebutt. The goal is to reunite community minds so educated and accurate solutions can be made.

Dialogs stemming from the MoU

which was recently presented by the Forest Service to the counties within the Blue Mountain Forest earlier this year have reached heights of fiction. The Jan. meeting held by Forest Service in Pendleton was not well received by attendees and, according to Harney County Judge Steven Grasty, the Forest Service representatives were informed by the whole of the attending county officials that they would not even begin to consider a generalized, blanket letter asking for their cooperation. That meeting ended with substantial expectations that each Commission Board would soon receive an individualized MoU, specifically addressing the unique aspects of the coordination efforts brought forth from the BMFP revision.

Baker, Grant, Union and Harney County officials were interviewed earlier this week, and all four offices had not yet received any correspondence referring to a cooperation MoU.

Baker County Commissioner Mark Bennett at least expected to see a signature page come across his

desk. He did not attend the Jan. meeting in Pendleton, but stated, "As I understood it, the Forest Service wanted us to agree to the same form that was signed back in 2008. I figured they'd at least send us a new signature page and then just attach it to the old forms."

Both Grant County and Union County Commission offices had the same expectation, and had no explanation as to why they had not received anything yet.

Public Lands are governed, for all intents and purposes, by the FLPMA Law of 1976. After hours of research, it was discovered that the Forest Service, under the Department of Agriculture, is governed under Title 36, Chapter II, of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). It receives legislative authority authorizing its activities from various chapters in Titles Seven, 16 and 29 of the United States Code (U.S.C.). They are also regulated by Chapters 22 and 35 within Title 43 of the U.S.C., entitled Public Lands. This particular section of code houses the FLPMA Law of 1976, otherwise known as

Chapter 35. To rephrase that into one, direct sentence: there are 52 chapters under the United States Code of Public Lands and the Forest Service is only obligated to follow the few and far between segments, where their agency is referred to directly, of two of those chapters.

The vast majority of the FLPMA Law denotes actions by which the Bureau of Land Management must follow, as defined in Subchapter I, Chapter 35, of U.S.C. 43. The federal regulations bind the Forest Service agency to coordinate with other government entities, however, §216.3(c) of CFR 36 describes the applicability of information received from collaboration.

"The direction for management of many Forest Service programs is developed with public participation during land and resource management planning part 219, and other activities. The relevant results of such public participation shall be used in formulation of Forest Service Manual directives to avoid duplicating public participation efforts."

Knight Resigns, Board Hires Witty and Palmer

By Emily Braswell

School Board members came out of their second Executive session on Tuesday evening feeling confident enough to announce who would be hired to replace current superintendent Walt Wegener.

Of the three final candidates, the final votes were unanimous to offer the position to Mark

Witty. Following that announcement was their decision to negotiate a position for Betty Palmer as Assistant Superintendent. Since the meeting the board released a statement saying that Palmer would replace Anthony Johnson as Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction for the District. For the remainder of this school year, Ms. Palmer and Chief Financial Officer, Doug Dalton, will work collaboratively with Mr. Witty to lead the district.

Knight Resigns

Preceding the Board's superintendent pronouncement was the announcement given by the Board's youngest member, Kyle Knight who applied his time for open comment to read aloud his letter of resignation, which had been given to the other board

members beforehand.

Knight stated, "I will be relocating out of the area to focus on school and military service. I feel that it is in the best interest of both myself and the District if I step down early. I have greatly enjoyed the experience of serving on the School Board during my term and I am thankful to the community for the opportunity. I am honored to have worked with such a fine group of people in the capacity of improving the district and its functions for the betterment of the students and the community."

Knight's last day of service to the Board would be March 31, 2015.

Promise of Baker Students Presented

The Promise of Baker students presented to the Board were Andrew Shetler and Baker Technical Institute (BTI) student Grant Ermovick. Shetler is a straight A seventh grader at

Baker Middle School and was introduced to the audience as "the uncommon man." Reasoning behind his title stems from his ability help everyone and the fact that he likes everyone. His positive attitude, outstanding academic abilities and his respect for others makes Shetler stand out among his peers, and is a testament to what a Promise student should be.

Ermovick, a senior at Baker High, also formulates that iconic image of a Promise student. He is also the very first BTI Student of the Month for the School District. Currently, Ermovick is taking two BTI courses: Engineering and Upper CAD. His most notable achievement came with a real-life lesson in designing prototypes and coordinating with a customer as he worked hard to create the hard case container for the panic-button fobs owned by the School District.

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FRI & SAT (4:10) 7:10 9:35
SUNDAY (4:10) 7:10
MON-THURS 7:10

KINGSMAN: THE SECRET SERVICE (R)
A spy organization recruits an unrefined, but promising street kid into the agency's ultra-competitive training program.
FRI & SAT (4:00) 7:00 9:40
SUNDAY (4:00) 7:00
MON-THURS 7:00

***UNFINISHED BUSINESS (R)**
Comedy.
FRI & SAT (4:20) 7:20 9:45
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IMPERSONATION continued from page 1

How Was it Discovered that Dielman was Impersonated?

In late June of 2014 Gina Perkins received a message asking about a lawsuit. The timing of the particular question as well as other statements made by the impersonator Perkins knew to be untrue during the exchange, raised immediate suspicion. A call was placed to Dielman and following an investigation it was determined the account was fake and that Dielman had in fact been impersonated. The identity of the online impersonator(s) remains unknown.

What Happen to the Fake Facebook Account?

The name on the phony Gary Dielman profile was quickly modified to James Dilman after an article appeared breaking the story in the Baker City Herald in 2014 and it ultimately disappeared altogether.

In Conclusion

Rep. Bentz said, "My staff and I have spoken with several law enforcement officials about the problem of online impersonation. They have explained that current law [in Oregon] is so lenient it's not worth prosecuting those who have impersonated someone. Victims of online fraud have little or no recourse should their names be slandered and their livelihoods harmed by online impersonation. This law will give injured parties recourse, and will give our law enforcement agencies an enforcement tool to keep us safer from this damaging practice."

"I am pleased that Representative Bentz and Senator Ferrioli co-sponsored this piece of legislation to provide legal 'teeth' currently void in Oregon law in regard to social media impersonation and social media fraud. The circumstance which was discovered in our own community had the potential to create political 'ill will' that has been an Achilles heel of sorts for a healthy political environment in Baker County," said Kevin Cassidy, Vice Chair of the 5J School Board.

He further commented by saying, "It was unfortunate that our District Attorney did not have the necessary tools to react to the evidence which was provided."

"Clearly, the legal review of this proposed legislation by subject matter experts supported the need to move this forward into House Bill 3092. Let us hope that our legislators find merit in this bill, pass it, and help future fraudulent behaviors related to social media find proper consequences," Cassidy concluded.

House Bill 3092 is currently waiting to be referred to a House Committee by the Speaker of the House.

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