

USDA Funding Awarded for Regional Agritourism Development

Five counties in Northeast Oregon will benefit from USDA funding awarded to help businesses and tourism partners develop and market culinary and agricultural tourism in the region. The project will hire an experienced and qualified consultant to coordinate activities and assist partners as part of a collaborative effort involving Northeast Oregon Economic Development District (NEOEDD), Eastern Oregon Visitors Association, Travel Oregon, and businesses and tourism groups from Union, Baker, Wallowa, Umatilla, and Morrow counties.

NEOEDD applied for the USDA Rural Business Development Grant to hire the consultant and complete project activities including:

Inventory of agritourism products available or under development in the five-county area

Engagement with agritourism working groups in two tourism sub-regions (Northeast Oregon and Oregon's Rugged Country)

Hosting of agritourism development work-

shops in each of the two sub-regions
Development of marketing goals and action plans

The project activities are expected to be completed by Nov. 30, 2016.

"We are really excited to leverage new opportunities for our businesses. Each subregion has its own character and strengths, and we want to make sure that travelers can find and enjoy agricultural experiences and products as part of their visit to NE Oregon," says Sara Miller, NEOEDD economic development specialist.

"Anyone interested in starting or improving an agritourism business is welcome to get involved," Miller added.

Miller is currently accepting proposals from consultants interested in working on the project, with a budget of \$44,000. For more information contact saramiller@neoedd.org or 541-426-3598. Consultant proposals are due Sept. 4, 2015.

Emergency Conservation Program Signup

A lack of moisture over an extended period of time has caused producers in Baker County to suffer from the effects of severe drought conditions. Farms and ranches experiencing severe drought conditions may be eligible for cost-share assistance under ECP. This disaster program is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency (FSA), which provides cost-share assistance if the damage is so severe that water available for livestock or orchards and vineyards has been reduced below normal to the extent that neither can survive without additional water.

A producer qualifying for ECP assistance may receive cost shares not to exceed 75 percent of the cost of installing eligible temporary measures. Cost sharing for permanent measures is based on 50 percent of the total eligible cost. Cost-share assistance is limited to \$200,000 per person or legal entity per natural disaster. Approved practices and measures may include:

installing pipelines or other facilities for livestock water or existing irrigation systems for orchards and vineyards

constructing and deepening wells for livestock water

developing springs or seeps for livestock water

Producers who have experienced severe drought conditions requiring outside assistance to provide supplemental emergency livestock water may contact the local FSA County Office. Requests for assistance will be accepted at FSA County Office from Aug. 31-Oct. 2.

To be eligible for cost shares, practices shall not be started until a request has first been filed at the FSA County Office and an onsite inspection of the problem area has been made by COC or its representative. COC will review the inspection findings when considering the request for cost shares.

Sumpter News

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As the fires cooled, the smoke settled onto the mountain slopes and into the valleys. No longer able to see the clouds, we lowered our gaze from the sky—Where the heck did the lake go? As of Aug. 23, there are fewer than 7000 acre-feet in Phillips Reservoir. The 2014 low seems to have been about 10,700 af. Back on Nov. 1 of 1988, though, the lake got down to 450 af. In 1992, it got down almost to 4000 af. At the end of Oct. 2001, we were looking at 2200 af. So having the lake this low is not unprecedented, and we'd probably all agree that the irrigated fields helped the firefighters keep the Cornet Fire from crossing Highway 7. Speaking of whom, thank you!

Calendar

Wednesday, Aug. 26—recall ballots on Ann Oakley and LeAnne Woolf mailed to Sumpter voters
Sunday, Aug. 30—SVRR Moonlight Express departs McEwen depot at 8 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 1—Sumpter Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary, Schoolhouse Community Center, 10 a.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 1—Sumpter Volunteer Fire Department, City Hall, 7 p.m.
Thursday, Sept. 3—Planning Commission, City Hall, 7 p.m.
Friday-Monday, Sept. 4-7—Sumpter Labor Day Flea Market
Monday, Sept. 7—McEwen Lodge, Masonic Hall, 8 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 8—City Council, City Hall, 7 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 15—recall ballots on Oakley and Woolf due back to County
Thursday, Sept. 17—Planning Commission, City Hall, 7 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 19—Sumpter Valley Community Volunteers annual meeting, Masonic Hall, 9 a.m.

Sumpter Library and Museum

Jerry Dunn, branch manager, reports that a new volunteer has been working at the Library. Christina Warmuth has been hard at work cleaning shelves and reorganizing books to make way for a new, cleaner look at the library. Christina also works with personnel at the main Baker County Library in Baker City. Jerry is excited about all the changes, and reports that the Sumpter Library will be expanding its audio and movie selection over the next few months.

The Sumpter Valley Museum Association has also been busy maintaining the museum this summer. Michelle DeFord has been

working all summer on a new display for the museum that centers around the historic L.C. Edwards Drug Store. Stop by and see the display or visit SVMA's website: sumptermuseum.wordpress.com.

People

On the evening of Aug. 18, Neal and Marlene Bork were visited by about two dozen friends. Neal came out to sit in the breezeway while fire department personnel presented him with a Sumpter Volunteer Fire Department coat. On the morning of Aug. 20, Neal passed away peacefully. His memorial service was held Aug. 24 at the McEwen church and was attended by well over a hundred people. Pastor Dan Martin, who lives in the Lockhart area, conducted the service. Several people shared stories of Neal's energy, mentorship, and volunteerism. The service was followed by a potluck and more sharing of stories.

Nancy and Leland Myers—accompanied by son Jim Myers of Breckenridge, Colo., son Chris Myers and his girlfriend Chris White of Baker City, and daughter LeAnne Woolf—attended the Aug. 22 wedding of their granddaughter Nicole Groshens, formerly of Pendleton, to Jake Dey of Bow, Wash. Nikki and Jake have their home in Mt Vernon, Wash. Friday night's rehearsal dinner was hosted at the home of Jake's parents. The outdoor wedding was affected somewhat by smoke blown west from Washington's fires, but the temperature was pleasant in the low-seventies.

Friends and family who were still present Sunday morning were treated to a boat tour of Deception Pass, the waterway that separates Whidbey Island from the mainland. Deception Pass was one of the candidates for the Northwest Passage, until it was discovered that Whidbey was a 37-mile long island rather than a peninsula. The Myers group was among those who got to see harbor seals, harbor porpoises, and other wildlife during the ninety-minute ride.

Churches

Sunday morning services are held at St. Brigid's in the Pines at Auburn and Bonanza in Sumpter on the first and third Sundays of the month at 11 a.m. followed by a coffee 'hour.' Weekly services at McEwen Bible Fellowship include Sunday School at 9:45 a.m., Morning Worship at 11 a.m., and Wednesday evening prayer at 6:45 p.m.

News and calendar items received by Sunday evening will be included in the Sumpter column the following week. Send in news and/or photos with captions of guests, births, group meetings, any special occasion.



Snake River fall Chinook season begins Sept. 1

Oregon fishery managers announced today that the upper Snake River will open to hatchery fall Chinook fishing on Monday, Sept. 1.

The river will be open from the OR/WA border to the deadline below Hells Canyon Dam and will remain open until Oct. 31, or until a closure is announced. In addition, the reach from Cliff Mountain Rapid (at river mile 246.7) upstream to the deadline at Hells Canyon Dam will be open from Nov. 1-17.

The daily bag limit will be six adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon. Anglers can also keep an unlimited number of fin-clipped jack Chinook. Chinook jacks are salmon between 15 and 24-inches long.

"Fall chinook runs in the Snake River have been impressive in recent years," said Kyle Bratcher, ODFW fish biologist in Enterprise. "We expect fewer fish than last year, however we're still projecting a very strong run topping 35,000 fish into the Snake River Basin."

In recent years, more and more Oregon anglers have discovered this productive fishery thanks to liberal bag limits and a long season. "With strong runs, this fishery has provided some fantastic opportunities for Northeast Oregon anglers to take home a cooler full of hatchery fish," Bratcher said.

Only barbless hooks may be used on this stretch of the Snake River, and anglers should consult the 2015 Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations for other rules that may apply.

Snake River fall Chinook migrate over 800 miles and pass eight mainstream dams to reach Hells Canyon, the farthest any salmon will travel in Oregon.



Oregon Trail Livestock's 2015 Purina® Check-R-Board® Days

Oregon Trail Livestock is announcing their 2015 Purina® Check-R-Board® Days, a customer appreciation event. Stop by Oregon Trail Livestock located at 3931 10th St. Baker City, OR 97814 on Wednesday, September 2nd from 8:30 AM – 5:30 PM to enjoy special savings on select items throughout the store and more! All customers that purchase \$20 worth of Purina Feed or more will automatically be entered in a drawing for a chance to win a 49" Flat Screen TV. Lunch will be served from 11 AM – 1 PM. Customers will also have the opportunity to enter in the national 2015 Purina® Check-R-Board® Days Sweepstakes for their chance to win a 2015 John Deere™ Gator TS, a Trip-for-Two to the Purina® Animal Nutrition Center, or Purina® Gear. See store for official rules.

"We are proud to serve the residents of our community and thank them for their continued loyalty," Martin Arritola of Oregon Trail Livestock. "We invite everyone to come celebrate our 2015 Purina® Check-R-Board® Days with us!"

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