

KITEMARE New signage planned

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In a letter to port commissioners, Brian Towey, a Hood River resident, described the situation as a “kitemare,” referring to occasions when a kiteboarder loses control of a kite.

“I hope that you will consider signage that explains the danger and unpredictability of wind sports and the associated equipment. It is apparent that many people just don’t know the hazards and would probably move to safer areas if they knew the alternatives available,” Towey wrote. There are already many signs, he said, but they are often ignored.

Back on the Nichols Basin dock, in the 2020 season, about 3,000 people from Anderson’s company launched paddleboards and kayaks from the dock. On the busiest day, more than 50 users per hour were on and off the dock.

Anderson said that, although he leases a portion of the dock, he has no authority to settle conflicts with swimmers. He offered commissioners several suggestions to improve the situation, beginning with returning “no swimming” signs to the dock and establishing rules for the dock including dock



The popular Nichols Basin dock sees swimmers and watersport enthusiasts compete for space.

Kirby Neumann-Rea file photo

capacity limits and paddle sport priorities during peak times. Safer swimming areas for families and youths are just north of the dock, at Marina Swim or Frog beaches, he said. Anderson offered to help the port pay for and install a safer floating dock off Frog Beach.

The port is scheduled to install signage along the waterfront before Memorial Day weekend, Port President John Everitt said. “There’s competing uses for that space and they get more intense every year,” he said.

Parking pre-season passes on sale thru May 26

Already, season parking passes are have become a popular commodity,

according to Michael McElwee, port executive director. Parking enforcement started this month with the sale of 717 pre-season passes, compared to 390 passes sold during the same period in 2019.

“There’s every indication that this will be a really busy summer,” he said.

The Port of Hood River sells parking passes for the Event Site and the west Jensen Beach recreational parking lots on a seasonal and daily basis. Daily parking passes are \$8 at kiosks located on the waterfront. Season passes, if purchased by May 26, are \$100, available online at portofhoodriver.com/waterfront-recreation/purchase-event-site-parking-passes. Parking is free at the city’s Waterfront Park area.



Majestic View

A bald eagle perches on a cliff overlooking the Columbia River Gorge May 14 just off of State Route 14 near Lyle, Wash. and enjoys a sunny Friday afternoon. According to the National Audubon Society, annual migration patterns see these majestic birds of prey fly south from Canada for nesting during the winter months and often stay here in the Columbia River Gorge during the summer months, with abundant hunting opportunities for these raptors, who normally feed on waterfowl and fish.

Jacob Bertram photo

SALE Primary objective is community

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process and I am not able to share more information or comment on (your) specific questions at this time.”

“Our primary objective here at SDS is to continue supporting our employees, community and our customers,” Webber said. “We’re doing our best to remain focused on the daily operations of our businesses.”

Julian Garratt, executive director at Perella Weinberg Partners, had not responded to a request for comment by press deadline.

Columbia Gorge News previously reported that community groups have concerns about SDS’s plans to sell its assets. CGN reported that the company maintains a higher-than-average harvest rotation, and has in its books a safe harbor agreement with Washington Department of Natural Resources for a habitat of northern spotted owls. In the event of a sale, community groups, such as Friends of the White Salmon River, shared concerns that the impacts will be widespread, from environmental impacts to impacts on the local economy and SDS’ some-200 employees. Pat Arnold, president of the environmental group, commented

in a recent post about the announcement of Project Steelhead, saying the sales brochure “makes it absolutely clear that the outcome will be maximum profits for SDS and for investors, at whatever price the rest of us will pay,” pointing out that the brochure hadn’t mentioned any environmental sensitivities.

News of the sale came late last year amid announcements of the company shifting gears. Last September, SDS announced that President Jason Spadaro, who had worked with the company more than 30 years, would be stepping down from his role, replaced with Webber, while continuing to serve as a board member. The company also installed three new board members around this time: Sandy McDade, who brings experience in the industry from Weyerhaeuser; Bill Brown, former president of Green Diamond Resource Company and chief financial officer of Plum Creek Timber Company; and Clyde Hamstreet, founder of the business consultancy Hamstreet & Associates.

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Writers must include their name and hometown (for publication) and daytime phone number (for verification, not for publication). Letters from an agency or group must be credited to the author or a contact person.

Anonymous or “name withheld by request” letters are not accepted.

Letters must be 350 words or fewer; generally, the briefer the message, the better. Opinion pieces longer than 350 words may be published as a guest

commentary at the discretion of the editor.

Letters are published as space allows, and efforts are made each week to provide as much space as possible.

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We reserve the right to edit all letters: Letters must be civil.

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